

# Cellulose to Cell Phones

Baron Ralph S von Kohorn

Cellulose to Cell Phones

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Publication Date:

Printed:     Cover by ????????, contents on a  
Brother HL-5150D and the binding by Modern Book Binders

Publisher: Steven William Publications, P O Box 13-521, Johnsonville,  
Wellington 6035, New Zealand

Narrative: Baron Ralph S von Kohorn with thanks for  
contributions from ??

Edited by: Keith Murray

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## FOREWORD

In 1963 a moderately sized man in his mid forties embraced New Zealand. He had been born in Germany, educated there and in Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, Japan and the United States of America. Ralph von Kohorn was then educated in the details of his father's enterprises, firstly in the factory and then as part of the international sales team. That involved endless travel to all parts of the world.

Ralph arrived in New Zealand to investigate the construction of a nylon factory and found financial advisors eager to be a part of the Von Kohorn worldwide enterprises. It would not be unreasonable to suspect that this eagerness was driven by the desire to obtain the largesse that Ralph von Kohorn was obviously part of and freely distributed.

Ralph also arrived imbued with old world courtesies and customs and found New Zealand did not offer a lot of the facilities that he had taken for granted in Europe and the Americas. As with the nylon factory, he set about providing himself with whatever was missing.

Many dreams fail and, for the nylon factory, Ralph's expertise was ignored to the considerable cost of many. Typically, many blamed Ralph for decisions with which he was totally uninvolved. Despite that Ralph remained in New Zealand, always willing to assist and always willing to offer hospitality. He was involved in many voluntary organizations and assisted in raising funds for many worthwhile projects.

It has been a fascinating honor and privilege to assist in compiling these memories.

Keith Murray





## OSCAR von KOHORN

I am Ralph von Kohorn. I was born Rolf-Stephan Freiherr (Baron) von Kohorn zu Kornegg, second son of Baron and Baroness Oscar von Kohorn zu Kornegg. My birthplace was a town in Saxony named Chemnitz. For a while, after the Second World War and under the communist regime, Chemnitz was known as Karl Marx Stadt but reverted to its original name in 1989 just prior to German reunification.

I made my appearance 14 December 1919 at 3:15 in the morning. It was exactly ten years since my father had founded his company. In deference to my mother, the Company's anniversary party was postponed to December 20th. A poem was printed and given to all the guests and celebrants of the anniversary which reads in the original:

*Frau Kohorn wusst for Monden schon,  
Das grad am Jubeltage,  
Sie schenken wird ihm einen Sohn, etc.*

and translates as:

Mrs Kohorn knew already months ago,  
That exactly on the day of the jubilee,  
She would present him with a son, etc.

Having so carefully selected my day of birth, it made all my future birthdays most pleasant, with double celebrations each year. This culminated with my fortieth birthday on the golden anniversary of the Von Kohorn organization, which was celebrated lavishly at the Plaza Hotel in New York.

The first known reference to the Kohorn family occurred in 1292 with the birth of Eric Kristian Cohorn in Husby, Sweden. In the sixteenth century my branch of the family moved to the Netherlands and the name became van Cohorn and later van Coehoorn. In the early seventeen hundreds Antonius married a German woman and he changed the surname back to Cohorn. When Eduard Cohorn married Sophie Mohr in 1789 he changed the spelling of his name to Kohorn. They lived in Dürrmaul, Bohemia that is now part of Czechoslovakia. At the time it was part of the Austro Hungarian Empire. Eduard Kohorn's second son was Marcus who was my grandfather. Marcus married Charlotte Pollak and my father Oscar was their tenth child.

Oscar was born on 12 October 1882 in the small village of Dürrmaul (Drmoul), a few kilometers from the well-known spa and health resort Marienbad, in Bohemia. His father was a farmer and distiller of Mogador, an herbal liqueur. Oscar studied at Grammar school in Dürrmaul and also had a private tutor. He was apprenticed, in 1896, to an ironmonger in Eger (Cheb), Austria and took night courses at the School of Commerce in that town. Receiving a scholarship to the Königliche Gewerksschule (now the Chemnitz University of Technology)

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in 1899, he graduated as a textile engineer in 1903. His original apprenticeship gave him a lifelong interest in machines and metal. In 1902 he obtained his first driving licence and, although he did not own a car until he became a factory manager, he was always proud of his early licence.

After graduation he worked for a time at Siegmund Goeritz A.G., a weaving mill in Chemnitz, and was subsequently employed as a textile engineer in a local carpet factory. While serving at the latter he devised several small improvements for weaving looms and in 1906 his employer advanced him to plant manager.

Shortly thereafter he invented a new type of carpet for which, in 1913, he received the first of his many patents; German Pat. No. 283,740. Until that time, all carpets produced by machinery were approximately one meter in width. If a wider area was needed, strips of carpet were sewn together. Oscar's invention made it possible to weave carpets with very great width and they



became well known as broadloom carpets.

He also developed a process for the spinning of carpet yarn from cow, goat and calf hair. The carpets produced were less expensive and more durable than woolen carpets and met with such a huge demand that the factory had to be enlarged.

In 1909 Oscar left his position to become the founder and partner in a new company, Chemnitzer Teppichfabrik (carpet factory) Oscar Kohorn & Co. that grew so rapidly that within a year it became necessary to increase the working capital. His partner at that time did not wish to make additional investments and the partnership was dissolved. Oscar was able to raise the required capital to refinance his factory and double the plant capacity. He continued thereafter as sole proprietor and

president until the formation of foreign subsidiaries made incorporation a legal necessity.



In 1912 he met Viennese operetta star, Vally Worth, who was giving a guest appearance in Chemnitz. Having seen her only once, he fell madly in love on the spot, at least so he maintained all his life. He attended every one of her performances from then on, always sitting in the same seat in the front row, dressed in black tie and wildly applauding each of her songs. After the performance Mutti would find her dressing room filled with blooms and a discreet card, simply saying: 'From an admirer'. My mother admitted that, after the first week of Vati sitting in the audience, she would peek through the curtain before the performance to check whether he was present. These were the days when Viennese operettas were the vogue. Mutti, the star performer in Chemnitz and adored by the public, would be called back on stage for one encore after another. In earlier years her performance had been so well received that after the show a number of the enthusiastic student audience unhitched the horses from her carriage and drew her through the streets to her hotel.

While touring, Mutti was always accompanied by her mother. When my father finally asked her to dine with him after one of her performances, she accepted, properly chaperoned by her mother. After a short romance they were engaged and married in June of 1912. His mother insisted that Mutti come to visit her in Dürrmaul to learn how to cook and to teach the young singer how to keep house. Being Viennese, Mutti wanted to be married in Vienna with her sisters, Paula and Rosl, and family in attendance. She had lost her father, the editor of the leading Vienna newspaper (Neue Freie Presse), when she was still a child.

Vati, with most of his friends in Chemnitz, wanted to be married there. A happy solution was found when the couple agreed to be married in the registrar's office in Chemnitz and to take the train to Vienna the following day for their church wedding and subsequent reception in the Kaiserstadt. Not until then were the bride and groom allowed the joys of the marriage bed.

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My parents took up residence in Chemnitz at 34 Rohnstrasse. The following year at their home, on 25 October 1913, the family physician, Dr. Schönefeld, delivered their first son who was christened Heinz-Horst Eduard (Henry). His third name Eduard was after the Duke Carl Eduard of Saxony Coburg Gotha.

Shortly after the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the German government prohibited the use of wool or mohair for carpets, as there were no available overseas funds other than for the war effort. As a result Oscar's plant was shut down in 1915. He then had the idea of converting it to the production of paper yarns, which were utilized for such products as sandbags for use in trenches. As the war continued he devised a new type of cutting machine that could slit paper into very narrow strips. This made it possible to spin paper yarns on all types of worsted and low-count (thin high quality fiber) cotton spinning machines.

Within three months he had built enough slitting machines to produce sixty tons of paper yarn per day. He then leased several spinning mills and gradually increased production to 150 tons of paper yarn per day. This output met a large part of the demand for yarn required in the manufacture of underwear and uniforms, items that had previously been in short supply. His firm also sold the slitting machines to other spinning mills. By the end of the war the machines were converting over 300 tons of paper per day and paid him a royalty based on their daily production.

During the war Vati entered government service. Because of the acute shortage of many raw materials in Germany he was encouraged to procure paper from sources in non-aligned countries, such as Sweden. Initially he took the ferry from Sassnitz in Germany to Trelleborg in Sweden. Later it became a regular routine for a pilot to fly him in an open two-seater plane to Stockholm, carrying with them the gold bullion required for pre-payment of the paper. Payments for raw materials in paper currency, bank-checks or drafts were unacceptable.

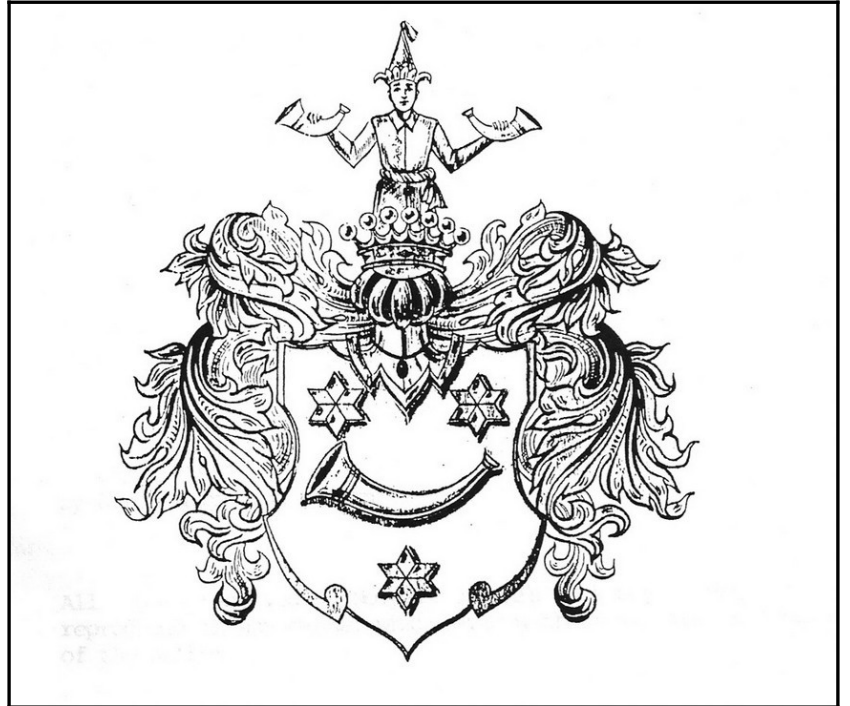
His success in negotiations with foreign suppliers led to his assignment to initiate trade discussions and purchase meat products from neutral Rumania. Entrusted once again with carrying the gold payment, he arranged for train shipments of live pigs and mutton to Austria. His repeated achievements in securing these important meat deliveries resulted in the Austro-Hungarian government appointing him, in 1915, Commercial Attaché in the Austrian diplomatic service with assignment to Bucharest. For his outstanding work Emperor Franz Joseph of Austria awarded him the title of Imperial Counselor.

Two years later, on 10 November 1918, he was raised to nobility by Carl Eduard, Duke of Saxony, Coburg and Gotha and made a hereditary baron with the title Freiherr (Baron) Oscar von Kohorn zu Kornegg. The German nobility similar to the British differentiates the bottom rank of nobility. The lowest is plain Baron, one step up the 'von' precedes the name and for the top ranks the 'zu' plus a selected nobility appellation is added to the name. Thus our family had a rank third from the bottom of the hierarchy.

With the hereditary barony came the right to have a family coat of arms devised by the *Wappenkundesamt*. The heraldic department in Frankfurt undertook the necessary research and recommended the use of the family crest granted previously to a member of the Kohorn family. The official description entered in the records of nobility reads in translation as follows:

*On blue, a hunting horn with the mouth facing right, accompanied above by two, below by one, golden star. From the crowned helmet with blue/silver covers a growing man in blue/silver divided clothing with collar and belt in reversed colors holding a silver hunting horn in each hand.*

The patent of nobility also confirmed that this design was based on the coat of arms used by the Kohorn family since 1530.



With the war drawing to a close, textile raw materials grew ever more scarce. Vati searched for replacements for silk and cotton and became interested in the manufacture of rayon, then known as artificial silk. He acquired a large area of land along the Chemnitz River at the outskirts of the town. He contracted to erect a factory to house his carpet mills and paper yarn plants. In an endeavor to become familiar with the technology of manufacturing artificial silk, he engaged chemists and engineers to study the chemical and mechanical aspects of the industry. He set up an experimental plant with pilot and full-scale machines to train his specialists. In order to operate the dye works and experimental plant he had a deep-bore well dug on his factory land. A year later, this well saved his and neighboring plants. A major fire broke out in a nearby warehousing complex of the GEG, the *Chemnitzer Grosseinkaufsgesellschaft*, and because of a summer drought the fire department could not effectively extinguish the conflagration. Vati's new well was able to supply the necessary water and, after eleven hours, the frightening blaze that threatened the Kohorn works was successfully extinguished.

Vati outlined a long-term process development program for his technicians. Further, he added a new company with the founding of *Maschinenfabrik Oscar Kohorn & Co.* in Chemnitz, and acquired a large machine shop in Wöllersdorf, near Vienna, where he also set up experimental laboratories. New production methods and machinery were developed and extensive research carried out based on studies during the war from 1916-18. After the war, his far-ranging program was implemented on a commercial scale.



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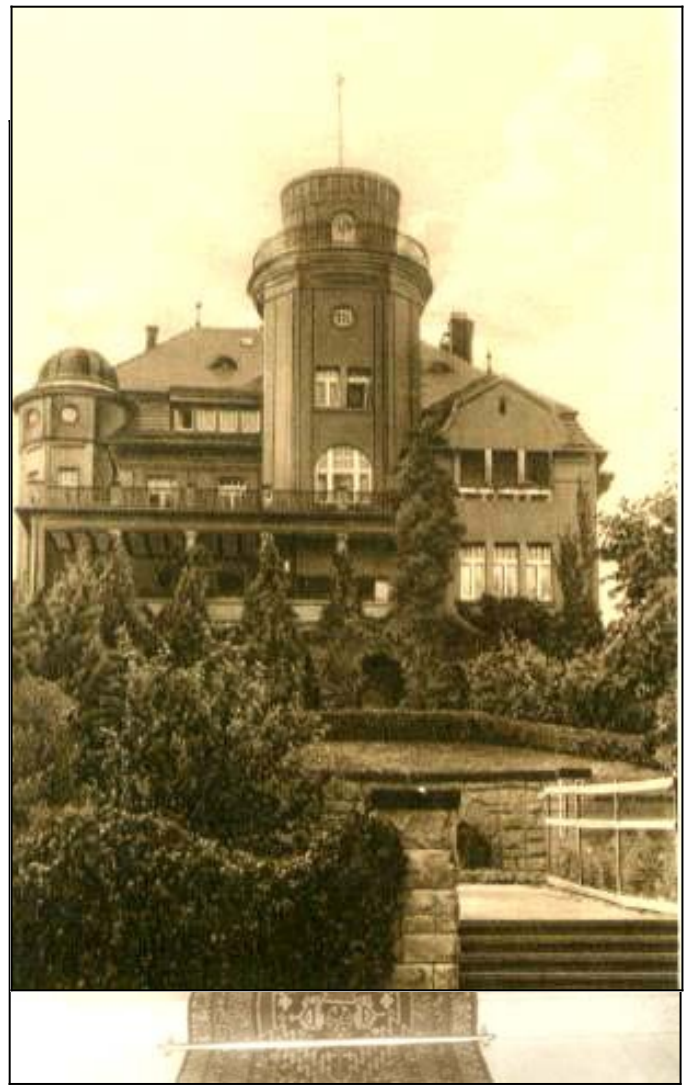
In addition to these new plants he acquired a controlling stock interest in Wegelin & Hübner, a machine shop in Halle, Germany. The engineering staff of that enterprise was put to work on the development of ideas in the man-made fiber field. The coordinated efforts of these mechanical and chemical activities resulted in many patents for machinery, processes and products in my father's name.

One of the important developments made by Vati and his staff was a reduction of the processing time required to convert cellulose (wood pulp) into finished rayon from seven to two days. He was also responsible for increasing the production speed of spinning machines and made many of the initial contributions towards the continuous manufacture of rayon staple fiber and the automatic after-treatment of filament yarn.

In 1919 Vati's company designed, engineered, equipped and put into operation the *Erste Böhmisches Kunstseidefabrik* in Theresienthal, Czechoslovakia. That rayon plant was the first of its type in the world and my father had a minority interest in it with his partner Baron Liebig. This project led to his supplying complete plants to interests throughout the world. In 1919 another plant was supplied in Scenica, Czechoslovakia and, at about the same time, the viscose rayon plant of *Fabrique de Soie Artificielle de Tubize* in Belgium was installed. A plant at *Etablissement Kuhlmann*, Odomez, France and *Filature d'Argenteuil*, France followed as well as the supply of major equipment to the synthetic fiber plant of the *I. G. Farben Industrie*, Germany.

### 35 PARKSTRASSE

The family home, which my parents bought in 1918, was a three-storey building, topped by a tower and built around the beginning of the twentieth century. The basement contained a ten-pin bowling alley and a large *Trinkstube* (leisure room) with an enormous oak table surrounded by benches. Also in the basement was the laundry, with a mangle for large table linens, and a huge furnace alongside the coal cellar. The furnace supplied the newly installed steam radiators throughout the house, keeping the residence warm even in the coldest winters. All windows were double glazed, as were the doors leading to terraces on the various floors. There were cellars





with a special larder for the hanging and aging of game and the storage of red wine. White wines were kept in the sub cellar.

The terrace off the main floor was used during the summer months as an important area for entertainment. After lunch, coffee and *jause* were regularly served there. Depending on the guests' preference, coffee was offered in tiny *cloisonné* or in wide *Hütschenreuther* porcelain cups, usually accompanied by varicolored *petit fours* and home-made *millefeuilles*, all *mit Schlag*. In typical German hunting style, one wall of the terrace was covered with antler trophies of stags, deer, chamois and one huge set of horns from a *Donauhirsch*, which was shot in Hungary.

The ground floor was reached through a white and black marble-clad entrance and stairway. Square brass stair rods held the carpet secure on the stairs. At the top were imposing double doors, rarely opened, leading to the main hall. To the right at the top of the stairs was a stuffed fox (rampant) holding a silver salver to receive visiting cards. On the left a small doorway led to a vestibule for coats and a guest toilet. From the vestibule another doorway led into the main hall. That was flanked to the south by the dining hall and an adjoining dining alcove, and to the north by my father's large study. Next to the main entrance stood a tall grandfather clock of dark wood with a glass door and a pendulum. The clock chimed every fifteen minutes. To the right of the entrance



into the dining hall stood a seven-tiered Delft vase that was usually filled with seasonal blossom or flowers. The entire ground floor had parquet flooring and in the center of the hall was a huge Persian rug with long fringes.

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Vati's gun cabinet with his hunting rifles was in the dark oak-paneled hall from which wide doors led to the lower terrace. The study, paneled in almost black timber inset with red and black velour, held heavy green leather furniture, a low oval glass topped table and a very large desk, which was set in an alcove. Floor to ceiling cabinets housed books and the east wall contained a large open fireplace. Near the desk was a side table on which was a radio crystal set. Twiddling three large dials aligned the fine whiskers on the crystals so that voice or music could be heard over much static. On top of the radio stood a huge horn, similar to the ones used with the gramophone. Beneath the radio stood a large battery that provided the power for this early example of the then recently invented wireless. On the desk stood a black telephone with a handle that had to be cranked. Since it was in our father's study, which was off limits to my brother and me, we didn't ever see it used. In 1924 there were only a small number of telephones in Chemnitz, but it made it possible for my father to call



home from both his office and the garage.

Next to Vati's study was the music room with its *Bösendorfer* opera grand piano. The room led to a two-level conservatory. The carpet in the music room was a beautiful Aubusson, very light in color. The silk wall paneling had been selected to complement the Aubusson's shade. One day Bibi, a miniature Pekinese dog, decided to empty her bladder on this valuable carpet and by the time the disaster was discovered the urine had left its mark and the discoloration could never be repaired. The tiny dog was a gift to my mother from Pauline Strauss; a thankyou for having her and Richard many times as

house guests. My mother became very attached to Bibi despite her indiscretion.

From the main hall, beneath a large stained glass window the staircase doubled back, through two landings, to the balustraded gallery, which surrounded the hall on the second floor. Here the Persian carpet stair rods were round in contrast to the square ones in the entrance. Doors led off the central gallery to two apartments, one for the parents and one for the children. My parents' suite included my mother's dressing room. The center of one wall had a lit glass cabinet, which held a collection of perfume bottles, which had been given to her at various times. She was particularly fond of Guerlain's *Mitsuko*. Her favorite powder came from Coty and was packaged in a box covered with pictures of the trademark powder puffs.

I always found it amazing that when my mother used her lipstick, which most ladies used a lot, she never looked in a mirror. She would take her lipstick surreptitiously from her purse and without a mirror apply it perfectly to her lips. "How does she do that?" I thought.

The children's suite consisted of three rooms; the bedrooms for my brother and me connected by a central playroom. In one corner, our playroom had an old fashioned *Kachelofen*; a floor to ceiling, dark blue Dutch-tiled fireplace, made obsolete by the steam radiators but because of its size and appearance, left in place. The nannies or governesses slept in our rooms.

Another door led from the gallery to our study, all in white, equipped with school-like furniture painted with colorful floral designs. The room also contained an upright piano and a blackboard. A further door led to the third floor that housed the guest apartments, staff quarters and a circular sewing room.

The parlor maids were all attired in black dresses, white aprons, white cuffs and white maids' caps. My mother's personal maid wore the same black dress and apron but without the cuffs or cap.

The property was surrounded by high metal fences, which enclosed gardens and lawns leading to the lower level of the land. On three sides wide gates exited the estate. The lowest, on the south side, held the main carriage gate and led to the caretaker's cottage, the six-car garage and kennels, past vegetable gardens and a hand operated petrol pump.

All the von Kohorn cars were painted a uniform color. A reseda green had been selected by my mother and was applied to the cars as they were ordered. Vati's vehicle was an open Rolls Royce with a glass divider; Mutti's a Rolls Royce landaulet, the body built in Paris by Keller. It consisted of a hardtop back section separated from the driver by a window. The chauffeur's area was convertible with an open or closed top. Both cars had spare wheels with chrome covers mounted on the running boards.

The *Concours d'Elegance* was held each year in Paris. Proud car owners, encouraged by the manufacturers of the chassis and bodies, entered their cars



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to be judged as to overall beauty and perfection. Mutti, proud of her new car, entered but won only second prize because of the white dust coat worn over the chauffeur's smart uniform.

Other cars my parents owned were a Gräff und Stift built in Austria, a German Mercedes Benz, an American Studebaker and a small tandem seater, called a Wanderer, which was built in Chemnitz. These cars were looked after by two chauffeurs plus a man who saw to it that they gleamed and were ready at all times. The head chauffeur was a burly Viennese named Heinrich Horacek,



devoted to my parents and quite used to traveling long hours to meet up with the family after they had covered larger distances by railroad.

Christmas is celebrated on the twenty-fourth of December in Germany. A Christmas tree reaching from floor to ceiling was erected each year in the conservatory, trimmed by the staff, with presents for every member of the family and household laid out beneath. Around six o'clock in the evening, everyone was called in to admire the tree with its glass ornaments and dozens of brightly glowing red wax candles (this was before electric Christmas lights), and to await the arrival of Santa Claus.

There is an anecdote that Heinrich, the chauffeur, whose Austrian dialect one could cut with a knife, was dressed up in a red suit and played Santa every year. He asked me whether I had been a good boy and deserved any presents. Turning to my mother I am supposed to have asked, *sotto voce*: "Mutti, how come Santa Claus is a Viennese?"

## EARLY CHILDHOOD

The expansion of my father's business in 1919 happened at the time I was born. Apparently I screamed a lot and was breast-fed until I was almost six months old. My mother told me that she gave up feeding me in this manner when my hardening gums started to hurt her.

When my parents went to the theatre or opera, which occurred frequently, my mother would sip a small glass of sherry some time before the evening feed. This would result in my sleeping soundly until my ambulatory meal returned home to provide the midnight sustenance. The sherry does not seem to have had any debilitating effect on me except, perhaps, that I never grew any taller than one meter sixty-three. That could also have been the result of a father measuring only one meter sixty and a mother one meter fifty-seven.

True to the fashion of those days, as the younger son I had a nanny and my brother, older by six and a half years, had a governess. On a balmy summer's day when I was about eighteen months old, my nanny had wheeled me in the perambulator (nowadays shortened to pram) into the park surrounding our house. I was left, presumably well wrapped, while nanny went for a stroll, or whatever nannies did when they were supposed to look after their charges, when a sudden downpour occurred.

By the time the nanny got to me, I was soaked to the skin. In spite of, one would hope, an immediate drying off and rewrapping of my cold little body, I promptly developed pneumonia, or so I was told. Fortunately there have been no apparent lasting health problems. It did, however, have an ill effect on the nanny, who was summarily dismissed.

To me, as a young child, Henry was a lot older and even as adults he was five centimeters taller. In spite of that, he and I could not have been closer. My first memory of the two of us together is when Henry drove me around the estate in a little wagon drawn by a goat! Some well-meaning employee of my father's organization had carved and assembled the wagon and presented it together with a milk-goat for motive power. There are photographs of Henry sitting behind me holding his little brother in one arm and swinging a small whip with the other.

On the bottom of a small rise within the property was a swimming pool with tall poplar trees planted on both sides, the length of the pool. The far end sported wide concrete steps leading down into the pool and the near end, facing the bottom of the drive, had a neat row of low bushes to maintain the long vista. There was a fountain in the middle of that end, spoiling the aquatic-sporting aspects but placed there by some artistically driven clever purveyor of garden architecture. It consisted of a rather sad looking bronze dolphin spouting water that was balanced on a square white marble plinth just clear of the water.

I have a very clear memory of the day Henry loaded me into the back of the tandem two-seater Wanderer. The auto was much too small to be used in regular street traffic and had probably been bought by our father for use by Henry inside the estate. We set off in the car and came down the drive in full



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flight. Henry either wouldn't, or didn't know how to turn, and we both sailed through the bushes, across the edge and into the deep end of the pool. Our car sank to the bottom. Henry and I scrambled up the fountain and contemplated how we could get out of the sure-to-follow punishment. That is, he contemplated; I was just the follower along for the ride.

I do not think I was old enough to swim but somehow Henry got me to the side. We climbed out leaving the car where it was and slunk back to the *Villa* on the hill where we were promptly caught in our dripping clothes. I don't remember much about the final outcome, but that sudden dip during very cold weather most certainly has contributed to my life-long aversion to cold water.

At one time I decided to run away from home, as every worthwhile child does at least once. While riding in a car I had passed a *Zuckerbäckerei* (cake shop) several times and knew exactly how to get there from home. I managed to get to the 'lower gate' without being seen and sneaked through the high white double doors. I marched down the street, turned a corner, continued straight on and crossed a bridge over the Chemnitz River. From there I walked, keeping to



the left side of Schefflerstrasse, until I came to the small shopping area consisting of a butcher, green grocer and the cake shop.

My attire clearly announced that I was 'that von Kohorn youngster'. Most of the local children of my age were rather roughly dressed, while I was attired in a little boy's suit, long white knee socks, laced boots and with neatly cut hair.

I marched into the shop, selected a slice of cake, asked to have it put into a bag and attempted to leave. I had no money with me and only later learned that most of the family purchases were simply charged and settled monthly. The lady who had helped me accompanied me to the door and looked for the car and chauffeur. I confessed to her that I had run away. The shop had no telephone and she went to the butcher next door and telephoned *The Villa*. Five minutes later one of our cars pulled up outside, I was hustled inside and in quick order found myself back home. It was fortunate that my parents were abroad and my escapade was reported to them as a minor incident, not to save me any punishment, but to save the nanny a severe reprimand for letting *Rolf-Stephan* escape.

When I was old enough to attend school, one of the cars would collect me from our front entrance and drive me to the Kapler Volksschule. The school was the closest one located to our home and in accordance with local regulations was the one I had to attend. It was located up a hill on a town street backing onto an open field. This location unfortunately had the disadvantage of being in the center of the housing estate of the local rural and labor population. The latter were mainly employed by my father's factories and were Communist of a type that prided itself to be to the left of Karl Marx.

Unlike some of my schoolmates who were often shoeless, I was always dressed like a little gentleman. After being ridiculed unmercifully I devised what I thought was a clever ruse. While in the car, I removed my shoes and socks, gave them to the chauffeur to hide and walked barefoot into the school. On the way home, I put on my socks and shoes and presumed that no one at home would discover my subterfuge. Alas, not a chance.

I remember when I was in real trouble for smoking and lying about it. Stupidly, I started to smoke when I was about seven. My father was a very heavy cigar smoker and his much prized fat Coronas were stored in a large wall cabinet that was humidified by sponges kept in soaking wet condition. My mother was a cigarette smoker but never smoked more than three cigarettes a day. She had a penchant for a brand called Troika. These were about six inches long overall but had only about an inch and a half of tobacco; the rest was a colored cardboard tube. The routine was to hold the cigarette by the tobacco end and then pinch the cardboard end into three opposing folds, the theory being that as the smoke rounded the bends it would cool and at the same time leave the tar behind. Each time the religious-like observance of pinching the tube and lighting the end was performed, I watched with fascination and could not wait to try some of that magic myself.

At an opportune moment I stole from the humidor closet a whole box of twenty-five cigarettes plus a box of wax matches. I disappeared to one of my secret hiding places in the park and followed the ritual: hold cigarette, pinch, pinch, pinch, light a match, hold it under the tobacco end and suck. Subconsciously I must have learned the way both my parents smoked. Neither of them ever inhaled, so my first attempt at smoking was the same. I pulled the smoke into my mouth, held it there for a moment and then blew it out with a sound of

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enjoyment. It was a "piece of cake"; I could smoke as well as my parents. Having been subliminally brainwashed by my mother to the use of only one cigarette after a meal, I had my smoke, put out the cigarette and felt no ill effects whatsoever. Then I didn't know what to do with the pretty colored cardboard tube, the box of cigarettes and the matches. I think this is where my later life predilection for collecting (or hoarding as some would say) began. It would be a shame to throw the colorful little tube away, but where could it be hidden?

There were always people working somewhere on the estate. Not long before, I had found some old porcelain tiles and used six to build a small vault under the lawn. I dug a hole, placed a tile on the bottom, made the walls with four further tiles and sealed the top with a sixth. I left enough space to place a neat square of grass over the top. Hey presto I had my own small hidey-hole to save the cigarette tubes. The following day the second tube was added to the first and the next the third.

Either my timing was off or I did not make the covering grass thick enough. One of the gardeners was cutting the lawns with a scythe and a sickle and discovered my little stash. Off he rushed to carry the horrible news to *The Villa*. My parents were on one of their interminable trips and my governess received the tidings. Henry had by that time graduated to having a tutor, addressed as Herr Studienrat, and I from my nanny to a Fräulein.

In the afternoon, when our chauffeur delivered me home from school, the dragon confronted me. "You have been smoking, how could you?" she shouted accusingly.

"Me, smoking? Never," I exclaimed. I felt two stinging slaps across my face.

"That is not for smoking, but for lying. You have been found out, admit it".

I was not one to hold back the tears and screamed my head off, as any ill-mannered, spoilt brat would have done in my place. That was of course not the end of the story. When my parents came back weeks later the governess reported the incident. They were wonderful parents and had the good sense to understand my childish desire to be grown-up, which they recognized in the smoking incident.

"We will make a bargain with you," said my mother. "Every Saturday after lunch you will be permitted to smoke one cigarette, sitting with us in the lounge, even if we have guests. But you must promise that until you are at least fifteen years old you will never again smoke a cigarette by yourself."

I gave my parents my word and did not smoke until I was fifteen and we lived in Japan. The anticipation of smoking one cigarette every Saturday, in public, was enough to satisfy my desire.

Another youthful adventure did not turn out quite so well and had a tragic ending. Near the end of the swimming pool was a half circle stone bench with an ornament at each end. One of these, in the shape of a pineapple, had come

loose and was only held by the iron rod jutting out of the base of the bench. I had a group of school friends visiting me and we played 'shot-put' trying to toss the removed heavy stone ornament as far as possible. One of the boys was swinging on an overhanging branch of a nearby tree and swung into the way of the flying ornament. It hit his head squarely and he fell, lying unconscious beneath the tree. A doctor was called, he was taken to the nearest hospital, but a shattered skull and damage to his brain resulted in his death two days later. I shall always remember our weeping class attending the funeral and the lengthy sermon, some of which reproached us for our youthful mischief.

There was another incident during my youth, which I will always remember. Rolf Becker, one of my little school friends, had a birthday party in the garden of his home. Suddenly a very severe summer thunderstorm developed and most of the boys and girls rushed into the house. One of my friends and I decided to brave the lightning by seeking shelter under a tall tree. Lightning struck the tree and passed through us into the ground. My friend wore a small cross on a gold chain around his neck and the lightning caused the chain to melt partially and embed itself in his skin, locking the cross permanently to his chest. He fell to the ground sobbing, while I was a bit luckier as the lightning had not touched me. I was, however, unable to speak for over a day. Fortunately that was not a lasting effect but I now lie flat on the ground if caught in a thunderstorm.

My governess, "The Dragon", was a strict, tough old creature. There were a few things I did not like to eat, amongst them, carrots.

"Carrots are good for you. They will give you better eye-sight", said Fräulein. What did I care about better eyesight? I could see like an eagle and I knew I hated carrots. So, the next time we had carrots I pushed them carefully to the side.

"You will eat what is given to you."

"I don't like carrots."

"That is not the point. It's on your plate and you will eat it. It's good for you to eat something you do not like. It will help you when you are older. And besides, I've already told you, carrots will give you better eye-sight."

I was not going to be subjugated. What could Fräulein do to me? She had orders not to beat me, except for extremely bad behavior. I thought I was in a strong position as I explained that there was no more space in my stomach, although I could just possibly manage to have a little more space for meat and dessert. That did not seem to me "extremely bad behavior".

Fräulein, however, knew how to punish without beating. The furnace that heated the steam radiators and produced hot water for the entire place was originally stoked with coal. I remember, when I was very little, men coming from time to time and, amid rumblings, emptying huge sacks of coal down a chute that led to the cellar. Someone else then had to stoke the furnace periodically.



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Probably less for environmental reasons than for greater economy and cleanliness, the coal-fire system was changed to an oil-fired boiler. A truck with drums would appear and these were emptied into underground tanks. The oil-fired furnace had one drawback. Every so often, when more heat was needed, the fire would automatically ignite. That happened with a tremendous hiss and a roar and the black furnace opening would suddenly ignite and tongues of fire come leaping out until the system was again in full operation. I was particularly scared of the noise and the fire and must have confessed my fears to *Fräulein*.

"If you don't eat your carrots I will put you in the furnace room."

I forked the hated carrots into my mouth and slowly started to chew. They tasted horrible, as I knew they would. I pushed the carrots into one side of my mouth and sat there with a bulging cheek determined not to swallow.

"Swallow them. Swallow the carrots or you will be put in the furnace room."

At this stage my stubbornness reared its ugly head. I sat there determined not to give in. After a minute or so I was marched out of the children's dining alcove adjoining the dining hall, down the back stairs and into the furnace room. The entrance to the room was on a gallery and a small steel ladder led down to the furnace.

Down we went until I was shoved unceremoniously in front of the monster.

"Here is where you will stay until you swallow the carrots. You may come out when you have finished."

Up the ladder went *Fräulein*, slam went the door and I was alone in the darkness with the furnace. Suddenly, loud hissing began when the oil was spewed across the bed of the furnace, and then came a great roar when the pilot light ignited the oil. I stood trembling with tears rolling down my cheeks. After what felt like hours but was probably less than three minutes, *Fräulein* came back. There I stood, sobbing and crying, but still holding the hated carrots in my cheeks.

"You dreadful child. There are many children who would be grateful to have such lovely carrots. All right, you may spit them out and I will tell your mother about it. You naughty little boy."

I received a cuff across the back of my head and was marched upstairs to spit the carrots into the toilet. In later years I often wondered at my stupidity at not spitting the beastly carrots into a dark corner of the furnace room.

Today I adore carrots, raw, cooked, and mashed or as juice. So maybe *Fräulein*'s teachings were not completely lost on me. The dark room and fiery monster did not affect me either. I like walking in the dark and never developed any tendencies toward pyromania.

Our caretaker and his wife lived in a cottage on the estate near the garages. Across from the garages and the caretakers family was the "duck pond". There were the ducks and geese which were the domain of the cook who used them

for the kitchen and replaced them with baby fowls when needed. The caretakers' daughter, Hanelore, was the six year old love of my life. I was seven and she was responsible for feeding the birds. Her younger brother, my admiring companion, was always dragging behind. We loved playing doctor, hiding in the luggage storeroom, taking off our clothes and trying to insert the stems of dandelions in the respective orifices. With dandelion liquid burning our bodies, these experiments were always short-lived.

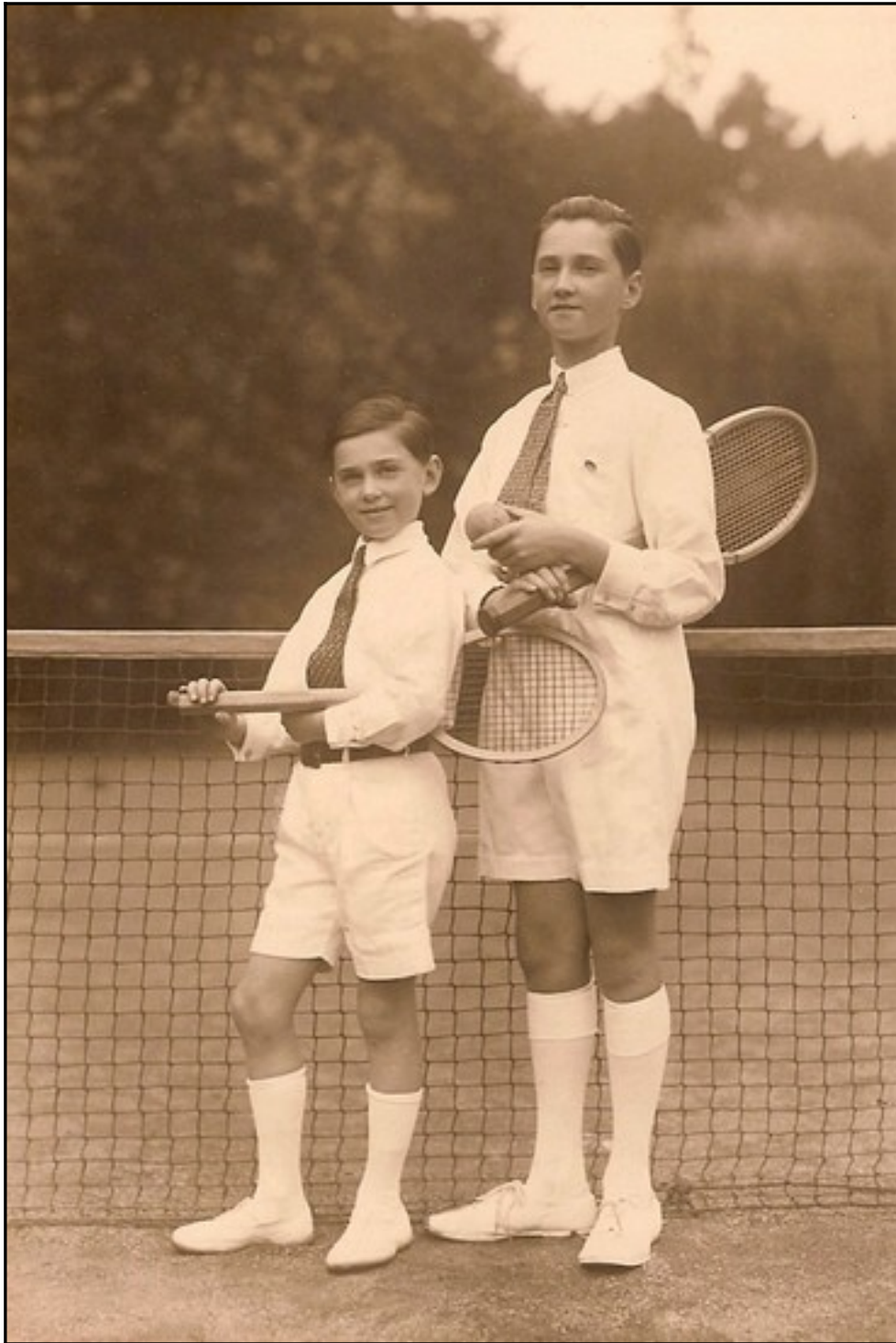
I had been given a red 'fireman's belt' as a present. It had two leather straps in front, and the belt was made of webbing with a large clip on the side. After wearing it for several weeks it had become grimy and needed a good cleaning. The caretaker had promised to give it a good scrub and I could hardly wait to get my fireman's belt back. Punctually at seven, every evening, the caretaker or his wife would go to the kennels and release the pack of more than twelve German Shepherd dogs that roamed the estate during the night and were trained to attack and hold any intruders.

I used the house phone to call the caretaker's cottage to ask whether the dogs had been released. The caretaker assured me I would be safe to come and pick up the belt. I did but I dawdled and on the way back to the residence the pack, since released, caught me. Not too far from the house I was attacked by Hektor, a three year old monster of a hound. He grasped me by my right thigh and began to savage me. I hollered my head off. My father, who had returned home early for some reason, heard my screams and rushed on to the terrace overlooking the rear driveway. Seeing his son being brutally attacked and savaged by one of the dogs, he grabbed one of his hunting rifles and shot the dog on the spot. It is said that once one of these *Wolfshunde* has tasted human blood, it is a danger forever. I was quickly bandaged



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and taken to our family doctor to be stitched up, but have carried the scars on my thigh for my life. Surprisingly, I have never had any fear of dogs and to this day handle and pet them, from a Chihuahua to a Saint Bernard.



Our parents were anxious that we should improve our posture and arranged for us to take regular riding lessons. Henry had a 'jumper' while I had a smaller and much gentler horse. During cold or inclement weather we regularly rode indoors in the local 'Tatersaal', an indoor riding academy where our horses were stabled. On fine days we were outdoors on riding paths and cross country. Henry, at ten, jumped well and even won the coveted 'Fox in Sight' trophy, while I, at four, was happy just to return home without falling off my peaceful mount too many times. Riding

helmets had not been invented and we both wore flat caps with a visor, proper riding breeches and jackets. A groom looked after the horses and we left the saddling and grooming to him.

When I was ten I entered grammar school, called *Gymnasium*. For me it was a very exciting day and was the first time I was permitted to wear the coveted flat academic cap, its color identifying the specific school.

Sometimes I was taken to visit Henry at his tennis club. Dad had donated land for the establishment of a Jewish club called Blau-Weiss to compete with the Arian Rot Weiss. There were only three courts and a small club house, but sufficient for the keen players and afternoon tea.

In 1922 when Henry was eight years old, Mutti had engaged a young Czech tennis player to teach my brother the rudiments of the game. We had a tennis court in our garden, not far from the swimming pool. It had a "tea pavilion" which allowed onlookers to watch the court in comfort under a protective roof. Karel Kozeluh was the coach, born in Prague in 1895 and stayed with us as our guest. In later years he became well known on the European professional tennis circuit. In 1925 he won the World Pro Men's Singles Tennis title and also the French Pro Men's Singles Championship.

Henry's basic tennis coaching stood him in good stead for the rest of his life. When in Flims in Switzerland he won the junior tournament of the summer guest. At the University in Manchester he won the junior tennis title at Oldham. Later, when in Japan he won a junior title and the Yokohama Country and Athletic Club senior championship. In later years he won many club tournaments in New York and continued to play on private courts and in State championships.

After the war he reached his highest position in tennis when he became the thirteenth ranking player for the state of New York.

Both my brother and I were always spoiled with new toys and gifts. I particularly liked the author, Karl May, who produced a series of children's books. He was a prolific writer and I had collected many of his volumes. One day Dad's eldest brother Siegfried, whom I called Uncle Fritz, very unwisely asked me what I wanted for my birthday. I was not backward about coming forward, as the saying goes, and gave him a list of all the missing titles itemized in the back of the latest of the Karl May books. The surprise came when my uncle actually gave me every one of those missing volumes. I don't think I ever finished reading all of them.

Another time, one of the customer's of Dad's carpet factory went out of business. It was a large department store that sold many different items. My father had agreed to accept goods in lieu of the money owed to him. To my brother's and my good fortune, one of the store's departments sold toys. The arrangement was for us to select toys up to a fixed value and, as you can imagine, it was like Christmas.



## HOSPITALITY

My parents were always perfectly groomed.

I remember my father, whom we called by the German term of endearment *Vati*, as immaculately dressed, whether during business hours, on social occasions or engaged in one of his leisure activities. One account reports that when they came home from a white-tie affair, Vati would change into black-tie to relax with a nightcap before going to bed. In good European fashion we had been trained to give our parents a light kiss on the cheek in the morning when we first saw each other, and again when we said good night. Dad was shaved by Herr Krebs, his barber, twice a day and his face always felt cool and smooth. He carefully knotted his tie until the length of both ends was absolutely perfect. He wore socks that reached just under his knees, held in place by sock holders and used braces (suspenders) to hold up his trousers. A belt was only used with slacks that were worn solely at sports occasions. All his shirts had French cuffs and he usually wore beautiful diamond and sapphire cufflinks, which mother had made for him in Vienna by her favorite jeweler, Rozet and Fischmeister.

My parents were renowned for their hospitality and friends and acquaintances vied for invitations to their parties. Because of my mother's operatic background some of Europe's great musicians and composers were often visitors in our home. Regular guests were Richard and Pauline Strauss,



accompanied by maid and lapdogs. They always enjoyed the superb cuisine created by our cook, who was from Bohemia. After one particularly happy stay, Richard Strauss was stimulated to compose the *Kohorn Hymne* dated Stuttgart, November 1925, attesting to my family's hospitality and friendship

Many of the artists who visited Chemnitz were invited to stay at our parent's much

admired residence. Leo Slezak, at the time considered Europe's greatest heroic tenor, was scheduled to sing one evening at the Chemnitz Opera House. Having arrived in the early afternoon by car from Prague, his favorite dish was served for *Jause* (five o'clock tea). Fresh goose liver in a tureen of solidified fat, carefully chosen for its maximum size and cooked to perfection, was presented to Leo. It was presented once, then again, and finally a third time. Each time Leo, the giant tenor, took a huge helping, placed it on thin toast and, well lubricated by goose fat, it slid easily down his throat.



Concerned with the effect the fat might have on his voice that evening, Mutti suggested he should eat the rest of the liver after that night's performance of Lohengrin. Leo's reply, rude but sincere was: "To hell with the audience. Goose liver takes precedence over opera any day". Next morning the newspapers praised his voice as being "smooth as the wings of an angel". Mutti was convinced it was the fat that was responsible.

Chemnitz, a comparatively small provincial town, had several outstanding theatres, opera and operatic houses. They all came under the direction of Richard Tauber, father of the famous singer of the same name. Originally an actor, then a director, Tauber senior was a majestic figure, over six feet tall with a magnificent head of white hair. In London on 1 September 1910, he married a domineering woman who was very much in control of the father of Richard junior. Else Hase (she insisted it be pronounced Hasé) had been married before, was two years older than her husband and brought two grown-up sons, Otto and Robert, to the marriage.

Richard junior's natural mother was a divorced actress in Linz (Tyrol), by the name of Elisabeth Seifferth. They had met during one of Tauber senior's guest performances but were never married. Junior's birth on 16 May 1891 was registered under the name of Richard Denemy, his mother's maiden name, and the name of the father was not recorded.

On 1 September 1912 Tauber senior commenced his appointment as *Generalintendant* of the combined theatres of Chemnitz, shortly after my mother had resigned from the operetta to be married. Richard Tauber junior, who was brought up using his father's name, was invited to give a guest appearance. His debut was on Sunday 2 March 1913, when he sang the lead in Mozart's "Magic Flute" in the Chemnitz New City Theatre. The press, apart from praising his heavenly voice, never failed to mention his monocle. Richard wore glasses as a child and was practically blind in his right eye. After he grew up he wore a *pince-nez* and later changed to a monocle.

The close friendship with the Taubers motivated young Richard to ask my mother to host his engagement party to Carlotta Vanconti at our home. It was a very formal white-tie affair, with the gentlemen wearing medals and decorations and the ladies displaying their finest jewelry. All the Tauber family, as well as many of Europe's great singers and musicians, were brought together in our house.

Richard Tauber junior, having performed several of Franz Lehar's operettas, usually conducted by the composer, had struck up a close friendship with him. In the mood for a modern work to be specially written by Lehar for Tauber, they asked my mother to invite them to her house to compose the music and lyrics in peace and quiet. Taking up residence in the guest rooms they spent the next week in the music room experimenting with one of Lehar's previously unsuccessful operatic attempts called "The Yellow Jacket".

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One night in the early hours, anxious knocking at their suite awakened my mother and father. It was Richard. "Vally. Come quickly downstairs to the music room. We have mastered it".

Fifteen minutes later my parents sat and applauded the final version of the re-named operetta "Land of Smiles" with Franz playing the piano and Richard singing the words which, later, became world famous. While Mutti was enthralled with the outcome, Vati, the philistine, soon excused himself to return to bed.

The late twenties saw many new developments in the family fortune. Always willing to be an innovator and entrepreneur my father spearheaded the establishment of the first golf club in Chemnitz and, with my mother, became a regular player.



Although their home was perfectly able to handle large parties (the dining hall seated 48 when arranged *in extremis*, there were often occasions when a larger number of guests required more space. A perfect solution presented itself when the *Metropol*, a small theatre seating about four hundred, required re-financing. Oscar bought the property from the municipality and had the seating re-arranged to allow the center seats to be removable. From then on Mutti could entertain to her heart's content, seating up to one hundred and twenty people comfortably for dinner and, if desired, could employ artists to entertain their guests from the stage. For an important birthday party, Mutti ordered table decorations from Paris. These consisted of small electric bulbs housed in colorful glass flowers laid along the tables that were arranged in an open

square. The center area was decorated with dozens of potted chrysanthemums that had been especially grown for the occasion in the family's hothouses.



The late twenties and early thirties were years of easy living and much happiness in my family. My parents were born travelers. It bothered them little to call for their Rolls Royce, be driven several hours to the Hotel Adlon in Berlin where they attended one function or another and the following morning be taken back to Chemnitz. Flying was still very much in its infancy. The grass field that served as the Chemnitz airport was not exactly built for comfort when a Lufthansa plane rattled along noisily to take off for the twenty minute flight to Berlin.

One of my father's favorite pastimes was fishing. About thirty minutes away from Chemnitz, in Falkenstein, he leased a trout stream on a long-term basis. On many early summer afternoons he would pack up the family and escape for a few hours of happy relaxation, catching fish and walking alongside the well-stocked stream. The freshly caught fish would then be prepared by the property owner's wife and served as an evening meal together with hard-boiled eggs, boiled potatoes and freshly roasted pigeons. The owner, who was addressed as *Herr Erbrichter* (hereditary judge), was a diabetic and well known for the huge amounts of liquid he drank. His wife served him water, amazingly, in a white chamber pot that would be filled regularly from the hand pumped well in the farmyard. Henry and I were always impressed at the sight and eagerly offered our help in manning the pump to refill the enormous container.

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In addition to the stream, Vati also held leases on three hunts. One at Komotau, just across the border in Czechoslovakia, was particularly rich in deer. The other two, also in Czechoslovakia, were rich with partridge, hare and pheasant. He employed a huntmaster (an *Oberförster*) who was responsible for the feeding of the deer in winter and for the maintenance of the shooting towers. Additionally, it was his job to try to minimize crop damage caused by the animals. In season, his main occupation consisted of guiding our family hunters and guests to a pre-selected tower from which a clean shot could be made at a stag carrying, it was hoped, an impressive number of points.

At large parties our *Oberförster* was dressed in his huntmaster livery, with our family crest on his buttons, at the side of his smart cap and on a small symbolic dagger. The latter, kept in a sheath at his belt, was used to give a hurt animal the *coup de grâce*.

Usually, before the hunting season opened, farmers owning the land on which the leased hunt was located commenced with complaints that the lessee did not do enough to prevent crop damage. It was the *Oberförster's* duty to ensure that a negotiated minimum number of birds and animals were shot every year. Single shooters could never handle the number of kills required. The only way the game numbers could be kept down was by organizing one or more large shoots each autumn. Arrangements had to be made to hire up to twenty beaters who would walk slowly towards the shooters driving the birds and hares in their direction. The hunters, walking in a line towards the beaters, would swing around and fire, only in the direction of the outer edges, at birds flying frantically away and animals trying to make a run.

At a good shoot there would be from twenty to thirty hunters, most equipped with two rifles. They were each accompanied by a loader who, once both barrels had been discharged, re-loaded and passed back the rifle. The dogs retrieved the kill and the bag would be laid out for a careful head count. Then a meal would be shared with the shooters' families while everyone congratulated themselves on the successful hunt. Some of the rabbits and partridges were distributed to the guests. Many hundreds of hares and pheasants were loaded on a truck and taken to Chemnitz for delivery to *Lehmann und Leichsenring*. This old establishment was the leading delicatessen in the city. Our family, an important customer, received a credit for the game delivered and would then draw against it when purchasing miscellaneous items.

One day Vati was invited to go shooting on Heligoland, an offshore island of Schleswig-Holstein, lying north of the Weser Bay. He was well equipped with a *Drilling*, a gun with two shotgun barrels side by side and, above, a third barrel for regular *Mauser* ammunition. My father was one of a party that was ferried across, dispersed and instructed to shoot from the beach, culling seals and reducing the plague of seagulls. The sealskins were ultimately treated and made into carpets and the seagulls occasionally stuffed. I remember in particular a rather unpleasant stuffed bird with glassy eyes sitting on top of a cabinet in our schoolroom at home, glaring down at us.



## HOLIDAYS

Easter, Whitsuntide, summer and Christmas vacations were usually the only time when the whole family could be together. Vati, dashing off to one of his important business conferences, usually spoiled even those weeks. While Henry and I were small, our nanny and governess, giving our parents a chance to do their own thing, accompanied us. In later years Henry was sent off with his tutor, Herr Studienrat.

In earlier years, there was one summer when Mutti, my nanny and I had gone ahead by car to Scheveningen an *Ostseebad* (Baltic Sea resort). Vati, Henry and his governess were to follow the next day by charter plane from Chemnitz. Our father had been one of the principal backers of an airport for the city and supported its use at all times. Shortly after take-off they ran



into a fog bank and dropping low, the pilot smashed into the side of a mountain near Flöha. Although the *Fokker* plane was a write-off, miraculously neither the pilot nor any of the three passengers were hurt. They continued their trip by car and my mother was not told of the crash until after they had arrived safely at the resort that afternoon.

The beach was the main attraction and, of course, swimming was very different in those days. 'Dressing cabins' were lined up on the beach for the ladies. Fully dressed they climbed a small ladder at the rear and, once inside, changed into bathing costumes. The cabins were then pulled into the surf by horse, the ladder lowered into the water and the ladies could climb in and out of the sea without exposing themselves in their wet bathing suits. Summer visitors could also rent *Strandkörbe*, large woven wicker baskets, which were set up on the beach and could be turned so as to protect those inside from the [damn] cold wind and seaspray. These baskets contained a seat large enough for two, a folding table and space to store such things as magazines, books, petit point materials and so on, while the front opened to allow the weak northern sun easy access to the occupants. The cold sea did nothing whatsoever to change my aversion to swimming.



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Several times a day fish vendors walked down the beach carrying high baskets filled with smoked eels on their backs. I can still remember the wonderful taste of the cold eels, although sometimes a bit gritty from the wind-carried sand. They also sold fresh milk; this was way before Coca Cola and bottled drinks were available.



One of the favorite summer retreats for the family was a popular mountain health resort in Switzerland called Flims. About one hundred and fifty kilometers south of Zürich, the village is delightfully cool, surrounded by forests and almost a thousand meters up in the mountains. The *Waldhaus Flims* had its own swimming pool, in those days a rare luxury and a large lake for boating. Henry and I, accompanied by the usual nanny and governess, went on daily walks along the forest paths to breathe in the good air and smell the pine needles. One of the major attractions was to chase after colorful butterflies with a long-handled butterfly net and to put them to sleep with a few drops of ether on a cotton ball in a glass jar.

The journey to Flims was done in stages. Heinrich and Henry's governess went first in the Rolls Royce. Together with our parents and nanny, we followed by train from Chemnitz to Zürich. There the family would stay for one night at the *Dolder Grand Hotel*. Henry and I, with governess and nanny, would continue the next day to Flims, and then the car would go back to Zürich and pick up our parents.

Protocol at *Waldhaus Flims* was strict. The evening meal required dinner jackets for the men and evening dresses for the ladies. We kids were usually dressed in velvet suits with lace collars, long white stockings and black patent leather pumps. Both the governess and the nanny were always dressed in their

uniforms, of which they were very proud and which indicated which nanny school they had attended. Henry, who was already an avid tennis player in his youth, entered the local championship and, to the jubilation of the family, won the junior tournament and was presented with a small silver trophy at a function in the ballroom.

Several times the family spent holidays on the Riviera. The routine was always the same. Parents, children and staff plus the Rolls Royce would be reunited after two days of travel. Quite often my parents would meet up with friends. On one occasion they were staying at the *Hotel Metropole* in Monte Carlo and were pleased to spend the evening with Richard Tauber senior and his wife. They were in the casino playing roulette when Richard slipped out and wandered across the street to the opera. He was considering bringing the local opera group to his theater in Chemnitz and wanted to listen to the lead singers appearing that night in

Moussorgsky's "Boris Godunof". He re-appeared about half an hour later and, since he spoke English fluently, made a play on words and reported to his wife and my parents: *Sie sind nicht Godunof in Monaco und werden nicht good enough in Chemnitz sein.* "They are not Godunof in Monaco and won't be good enough in Chemnitz."



The photographs on pages 34 shows mother's sister, Rose, strolling in Monte Carlo with Mutti, Henry, Dad and myself. Mother usually invited one of her friends or relatives to accompany her because of my father's frequent absences.

Other Riviera hotels on the list of the often visited von Kohorn favorites were the *Hotel Belle-Rives* at Juan-les-Pins, the *Negresco* in Nice and the *Casino Park Hotel* in Menton. There they would meet up with international friends. The morning was usually spent playing golf, followed by a heavy lunch in one of the famous restaurants nearby, then back to the hotel for a *siesta*. In the late afternoon was *thé dansant*, after which everyone dressed for a fashionably late dinner, before going on to a revue or stage show at one of the currently *in vogue* night-clubs.

All their lives Mutti and Vati fought not to gain too much weight. Dieting became part of their lives, but they always remained what was amiably called portly. They enjoyed perfect health all their lives and when people remarked about our father's fine teeth he proudly told them that it was hereditary and that not one was false.

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He was the founder of the Rotary Club in Chemnitz and its president. In later years, in the United States, he became a member of Rotary International. This group absorbed members of the European Rotary clubs that had been disbanded by the Nazis. Vati often proudly claimed more than one hundred percent weekly attendance achieved by attending two meetings in the same week at different locations. He was also an active Free Mason but found little joy in the required studies of Masonic rituals and ceremonies.

## LOSS OF SIGHT

In May 1922 my father wanted to assist the underprivileged children of Chemnitz and purchased a country estate at Dönschten, near Dresden, which he converted into a children's home. It was known as the *Freiherr von Kohorn Stiftung* and by the end of its first five years had housed 889 boys and 800 girls.

In the mid-twenties Vati, while being driven in his open Rolls Royce through a village in Saxony, suffered damage to his eye. Children threw flowers into the car. The stem of one scratched the retina of his right eye. Rushed to a doctor, he was taken to the eye clinic at the University of Leipzig. Professor Wolfrum, the attending surgeon, tested the comparative pressure difference between the injured and healthy eyes. A one in a thousand accident happened when the probe of the instrument penetrated the left eyeball causing much of the eye fluid to be lost. After an emergency operation and weeks of recovery with both eyes bandaged, the sad conclusion was reached that the sight of the left eye would be permanently impaired and the scratched right eye resulted in tunnel vision.

In the late twenties Vati entered a new phase by taking great interest in mining. Traveling frequently in his Rolls Royce from Chemnitz to visit his mother in the village of Duerrmaul where he was born, he had to cross the *Erzgebirge*, (the Ore Mountains).

Each crossing always meant being checked by the border guards at Gottesgab, first when leaving Germany and then when entering Czechoslovakia, now called the Czech Republic. The road was barred at the boarder by a heavy pole across the street and a boarder guard would come out of his little shack and while saluting lift the pole for the crossing car to pass. In the very early days, prior to

1929 there was the added thrill to cross from one side of the road to the other. In Germany we drove on the right side of the road while in Czechoslovakia one drove on the left. Traffic always was light and the boarder crossing was always a pleasant interlude to the trip. If the boarder guards were bored they would pretend to be busy and slowly turn one page after another while studying the





passports and the strictly required visa. Also depending on the political affiliation of the guard the crossing in a Rolls Royce could result in a painfully slow inspection of all luggage and an unfriendly mumbled remark about the wealthy classes, or, when blessed with an elderly experienced public servant, who would wave us on with a friendly salute, one hand readily extended to accept the discreetly folded bank note of small denomination, for his work performed, as was to be expected from the owner of such a fancy car.

En route lay a small village, Joachimsthal, which had acquired a reputation for curative baths. Vati learned that there was a newly discovered and much discussed element in the ground that was found in pitchblend. The substance was called radium and was said to give relief to sufferers of numerous ailments. He went to Paris to meet with Madame Marie Curie to seek her advice about this new material. Encouraged by her, he bought the mine and became one of the first producers of radium in Europe. The mining venture flourished until a major strike of purer radium was discovered in the Belgian Congo. Their cheaper production methods and better quality unfortunately soon made operations at *Joachimsthal* no longer viable and Vati decided to close the mine. It was not reopened until, under the communist government, production costs were of small concern and the mine was put back into operation.

Having been bitten by the mining bug he invested in two further ventures. Near *Joachimsthal* was another very deep mine producing lead. He acquired that company and, shortly after, a silver mine in Silesia. Neither was economical but good use was made of any excess silver. A former jeweler to the royal Saxon court in Dresden was entrusted with the task of producing the von Kohorn family cutlery and plate. Engraved with the family crest on the handle of each utensil and the rim of plates and dishes, craftsmen produced a complete set of silverware for forty-eight people. In my brother's and my homes there are still a few of these items in daily use. The only lasting reminder of the mining venture was Vati's life-long claustrophobia that resulted from his being trapped in the lead mine during a visit. Deep down in the earth, the shaft elevator had a failure and the crew and my father could not be rescued for several hours.

He once more became involved in mining when in the mid fifties he negotiated the rights to mine sulfur high up in the Andes and formed the *Compañía Ecuatoriana de Mineras Asufre*. Henry later continued the family interest in mining when he acquired rights to silver deposits in Nevada.

Another occasion arose where Vati demonstrated his entrepreneurial skills. When the local hotel proved to be too 'provincial' for visitors from the bigger cities he, together with a few friends, founded a hotel company called *The Chemnitzer Hof*. Vati took on the chairmanship, hired architects, contracted builders, appointed skilled hotel management and in record time had a modern, widely acclaimed hotel with a renowned kitchen in operation.

Vati's investments were by no means always successful. He was invited to take a major investment in one of the leading banks in the Netherlands. *Amstelbank* was very highly regarded but was in the process of expanding and needed new



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capital. Our father was in a position to make the money available but left the operations of the bank to the professionals. Several months later, while he was at the *Hotel Adlon* on a weekend visit to Berlin, he was telephoned by the chairman of the supervisory board of the bank. He relayed the sad news that, unless a rather large amount of money was made available within twenty-four hours, the bank would be unable to open its doors the following Monday. Vati left by car early the next morning to be driven to Amsterdam and, with his personal guarantee, enabled the bank to open. Unfortunately the news of the difficulty was soon out, there was a run on the bank and it closed its doors the following day. He made good his guarantee but swore never again to finance a bank. After this misadventure he quoted for a little while the old adage: *Schuster bleib by Deinen Leisten*. (Shoemaker, stick to your lasts.)

Not too far away from Amsterdam were two man-made fiber factories, one in Arnhem and one in Ede. Rather than becoming involved in complete turnkey operations, Vati's company for the first time supplied only machinery to these factories. They were owned by a large Dutch combine and operated successfully. Thus began a new era in the family business.

These extracurricular activities, however, never deterred my father from following the main business of establishing new industries in the man-made fiber and allied fields. In 1929 his organization supplied a plant to Magyarova in Hungary and also in Klin in the Ukraine and Mogilev in the Soviet Union.

Vati traveled several times to Moscow to negotiate the establishment of these factories with the Russian government. The supply of machinery and equipment was insufficient. The clients also demanded know-how and process information that could only be provided by sending technicians, consisting of engineers and chemists, from abroad. Staff from several countries were employed, trained in the von Kohorn experimental plants and then assigned to jobs in many parts of the world.

Visits to the Soviet Union were made by train from Berlin via Warsaw. A state owned car would collect Vati from the railway station in Moscow and take him to the *Hotel Métropole*, not far from the Kremlin. Always accompanied by an interpreter he would be called to meetings with his negotiators at all hours of the day and sometimes all night sessions. There were few souvenirs to take home to the family. The removal of antiques from Russia was prohibited unless purchased from a state approved store and accompanied by an export permit. Exempt from restrictions was religious clothing so Vati usually purchased a number of magnificent antique brocaded vestments to bring home to mother and also for friends.

Not too far from Chemnitz and within easy traveling distance from both the Halle and Wöllersdorfer machine shops lay Zlín, headquarters of the Jan Bata shoe empire, and Baticovce, one of its major factories. After some negotiations with the Bata principals, Vati negotiated a contract to supply the latest von Kohorn machinery and processes. This contact with the Bata family led, many years

later, to further contacts when Thomas Bata, the founder's son, came to Japan in 1937 and was a guest in our Tokyo house.

At that time travel within Europe was mostly by train and it was always easy to reserve Pullman compartments and enjoy utter comfort. As described before, one of the cars went ahead with Heinrich who would be at the destination railway station to meet my parents, while a second driver took them to the train. Luggage would travel with us, looked after by my mother's maid.

Overseas travel became a way of life and my parents crossed the Atlantic many times. Traveling by steamer was complicated but always thrilling. Departures were from Hamburg, Bremen or Calais. According to Mutti, their large vertical steamer trunks would be waiting in the cabin under the watchful eye of a stewardess assigned to the suites. There would be the ubiquitous farewell parties accompanied by champagne and caviar, and soon the stentorian voice of a purser passing down the corridors, striking a gong and announcing: "All ashore who's going ashore". Then, a loud blast from the ship's horn announced the actual sailing. Finally there would be a dash to the promenade deck to throw streamers ashore which would slowly tear, one by one, as the tugs pulled the ship away from the pier.

Soon after departure would be a visit to the head purser to place passport, jewelry and cash into the ship's vault, the travel agent having previously alerted the staff to assure special treatment for my parents. A stroll, the unobtrusive exchange of a five-pound note to the headwaiter to assure a select table for two, arrangements for the masseur, the hairdresser, the steward who assigned the deckchairs, the head barman and the librarian, who also arranged the card games. For the experienced traveler it was also advisable to quickly secure the hire of the best and most glamorous attire for the costume or masked ball that was always held towards the end of the voyage.

Shipboard routine required a different ballgown every night and no lady would be seen twice in the same ensemble when taking her daily walk around the deck. The hairdresser had to be arranged for the night of the ball when my parents usually ate at the captain's table. There was skeet shooting from the stern deck and buckets of golf balls for practice drives into the sea. A daily massage or the gymnasium would be organized for my father. Mutti would while away the time playing mah jong, rummy and solitaire or resting in a deck chair in a protected corner of the promenade deck.

At eleven o'clock in the morning the ship's distance traveled would be posted and the participants in the daily pool would assemble in the bar to collect the winnings, bet on the next day's run, and have a drink with new friends. The ship's local time would be posted and all clocks would be advanced or retarded depending on the direction of the voyage. At some stage a boat drill would be held. The well-tipped steward would have providentially laid out the life vest, usually stored in the closet, to be worn when the clanging bell called for all passengers to assemble at their assigned life boat station. It was a drill that no one dared to miss.

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Arrival in the port of New York was always spectacular. First the Statue of Liberty welcoming all to the great USA; then immigration officials boarding to inspect passports; luggage locked and ready to be taken ashore; the excitement of the tugs bringing the ship alongside the pier and, finally, setting foot safely on dry land.

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Between 1926 and 1928 three complete plants for viscose rayon yarn were established in Japan, an acetate plant was installed in Switzerland, and a viscose rayon plant was set up in Lwow, Poland. In the latter years Oscar's company installed an acetate rayon plant for *I. G. Farbenindustrie* in Berlin, and two viscose plants in England.

Considerable business for the Austrian machine shop at Wöllersdorf and other interests meant it seemed easier to establish a Viennese office and residence rather than use hotels. The *Palais Schwarzenberg* on the Schwarzenbergplatz was available, rented and used as head-office of the Austrian von Kohorn operations. Similarly, a fine old house near the *Imperial Hotel* was purchased and equipped to be available as a residence when my parents were in Vienna. In the final outcome it proved to be more convenient to stay at the hotel than to maintain a permanent staff at the residence. The *Wöllersdorfer Werke* were partly re-tooled at that time and started to produce refrigerators named *Evercold*. Even German speaking wags unfortunately soon called them *Nevercold* and this unhappy name not only stuck, but also killed all sales. The works quickly went back to producing man-made fiber machinery and equipment and other items.

An idea of producing a 'public demand item' failed badly. The foundry division had spare capacity, a large number of workers and was looking for a new production item. In the post-war era the use of cars increased sharply. There were a large number of cars coming onto the market and the buyers were attempting to give their automobile a distinctive look in order to differentiate it from that of their neighbor. One idea was to produce personalized chrome-plated hood ornaments that could be screwed into the bonnet's radiator cap.

The foundry produced about twenty-five different designs - horses, dogs, fish, mermaids, trees, etc. In addition to these standard items they could also supply individual ornaments with the owner's initials or special motifs and patterns. One of my uncles was put in charge of this specialty department and I wish I could say it operated with great success. It failed miserably. Thieves and vandals found the ornaments irresistible. After the car owners had replaced the stolen item once or twice (to the delight of the foundry) word went around and sales dried up completely.

Several rayon companies in the United States were supplied with von Kohorn machinery, including *E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co*, whose Richmond, Va.

plant was equipped exclusively with my father's bobbin spinning machines. During the thirties much equipment was supplied to other countries, including Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden and Austria. In 1935 a complete viscose rayon plant was established at Gemlik in Turkey and in 1937 a viscose rayon and staple fiber plant was set up at Lupeni in Rumania. By 1934 so many installations had been negotiated by Mitsui, the von Kohorn agent in Japan, that an office was established in that country and Vati personally directed the sales and engineering.

An office was opened in New York in 1921. In 1926 Vati had established his own firm, Oscar Kohorn & Co., at 342 Madison Avenue. The primary task was importing weaving plants, rayon machinery and carpets. All of these items were manufactured in his German and Austrian factories.

## SCHOOL

Chemnitz was a provincial town with a very strong left-wing population. My father's recently awarded title of Baron meant he was a minor aristocrat. As such he was a true blue monarchist and did not hesitate to show his political feelings. In turn, neither did the people of Chemnitz hesitate to express their feelings, not only in invariably noisy fashion, but also in the local gutter press and in damage to our cars. Louts dressed in brown uniforms scratched the sides of the car with a sharp instrument. At the same time there was the rising of the National Socialist party led by Adolf Hitler. By 1930 my parents understandably feared for the safety of my brother and me and we were sent to school in Berlin. Political factions were mostly center right in the capital and individuals were less conspicuous.



Henry stayed with an uncle, Dr. Oskar Kron, a patent attorney living in Spandau. That created in Henry his lifelong special interest in patents, of which he holds many. After completing his studies in Berlin, Henry went to the College of Technology at Manchester University in England.

Vati's erstwhile mentor, Siegmund Goeritz, had two sons, Erich and Karl. Erich had long ago moved to Berlin and with his Bavarian wife, Senta, had two sons, Thomas and Andreas. Andy was my age and the family was happy to have me stay with them in their large apartment. On the fourth floor at 42 Schlüterstrasse, one block from the Kurfürsten Dam, I was quickly enrolled at the *Grunewald Gymnasium*, (junior college) easily reached by streetcar from the Goeritz residence.

We three boys were looked after by Fräulein Zepke. She made sure that Thomas and Andy practised their music daily and conversed in French. The clothes we wore to school consisted of "knickerbockers" and long stockings. I



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usually ran to and from the streetcar stop to the school.

Erich was driven daily to the office at his nearby factory where they produced general knitwear, mostly bathing suits. Their advertising jingle became famous for its catchy rhyme

“Venus Marati Maschenfest Hält Maschen selbst beim Waschen fest.”

translated

“Venus Marati run resist, prevents runs even during washing.”

Nightly, when he returned home, his first action was to disappear into the guest toilet next to the apartment's entrance where he hoped to be undisturbed. It was our great enjoyment to make loud noises and bang on the door until poor Erich would emerge with suspenders loosened and chase us through the apartment attempting, with much laughter and loud shouting, to whip us.

The Goeritz family had one of Germany's well known privately owned collection of French impressionist paintings. The walls of their spacious apartment at Schlueterstrasse 42 in Charlottenburg/Berlin were covered with large works by Auguste Renoir, Paul Cézanne; the ‘Doge Palace’ by Claude Monet, an Edouard Manet, a Camille Pissarro and the like. Erich was a frustrated painter, who had his easel and palette set up in the middle of the music room room from where he sought inspiration from the surrounding works of the great avant-garde French artists of the 1830 to 1930 period.

There was another equally large apartment on the opposite side of the lift foyer from the Goeritz. In there lived an elderly dark mostly scowling man. He was Doctor Albert Einstein who I sometimes met at the elevator and of course never dreamt of his importance.

Eric had invested a large part of his considerable fortune in art and devised a clever way to keep his collection before it was confiscated by the new German regime.

He arranged for an art dealer to advertise an international exhibition of French impressionists and invite collectors in Europe to loan their works for an exhibit in Luxemburg. The invitations were sent to collectors and in particular to the German government with the hope that they would persuade the great art collector Erich Goeritz to exhibit his treasures. The ruse worked and Erich was strongly encouraged by a proud German Government and art lovers to show his wonderful paintings in Luxemburg.

The Goeritz collection was carefully packed and transported from Berlin to Luxemburg where the German ambassador opened the show. The affair was scheduled to run for two months and the Goeritz family used that time to make all necessary preparations to disappear from their home in Berlin towards the end of the exhibit. The paintings never returned to Germany and the Goeritz family enjoyed their treasures, after moving to London, for many more years.

The jewel in Eric's crown came when two of his own paintings were accepted by the British Museum and he was awarded the long sought appellation **RA** (Royal Academy) after his name.

One Sunday, while living in Berlin, I was invited for *Jause* with Uncle Oskar and Aunt Hilde with whom Henry had lived. Germans are title happy and Henry had been permitted to address Oskar as "Uncle". When I visited I was instructed to address his wife not as Aunt Hilde but as Frau Doktor. I took the *U-Bahn* (the underground) to Spandau, carrying a bunch of flowers. I was rewarded with a table complete with linen cloth, fine china and a freshly baked Gugelhupf cake which I enjoyed eating with much enthusiasm.

The Goeritz family also had a holiday home at Geltow in Havelland, along the Havel River, located only about forty kilometers from Berlin. Thomas, Andy and I spent many nights with stakes and prongs that had small lights attached, attempting to spear spotted flounders on the river bottom. I cannot remember ever spearing a single fish.

There was another childish prank that could have gone very wrong. We carefully scraped the sulfur heads off a large number of matches. This pile of sulfur we placed at the bottom of a sandy cave behind the house. Thomas, the eldest, then crawled to the bottom of the cave and attempted to ignite the sulfur pile with another match. After several attempts it finally ignited with a hiss and a bang. The top of the cave collapsed and Andy and I dragged the sand covered Thomas by his feet from the hole. Fortunately, no one ever found out.

When the semester of my school finished I came back by train to Chemnitz for the summer holidays.

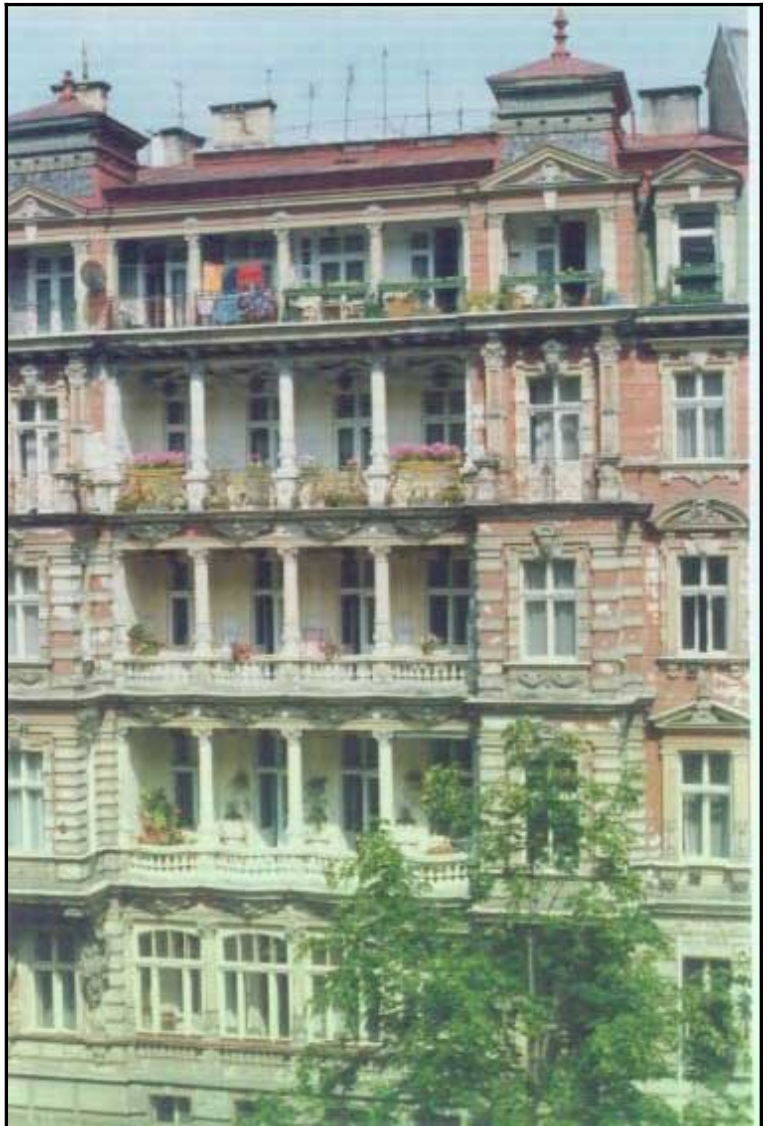
With hindsight it is now clear that during the period that I was at school in Berlin, Vati decided that the political situation in Germany would no longer be acceptable for his family. He had no religious beliefs but his parents were both Jewish. As a result he commenced to reorganize his affairs. His patents were transferred from his own name to an offshore company. Increasingly he was involved in establishing overseas companies to manage his businesses. He was happy that Henry was in England away from the Nazi and communist turmoil that was enveloping Germany and Chemnitz and in particular. It seems that he then looked for ways to remove the rest of his family from Germany. I was unaware of his planning, my Jewish ancestry and sheltered from the Nazi propaganda.

There were telephone calls suggesting not very politely that my family would no doubt be happier if living away from Chemnitz. Then came the sudden arrest of my father who was taken to the local Chief of Police headquarters. My mother immediately approached him and offered her large emerald necklace as payment for his quick release. The necklace had been a gift from Oscar to Vally, which he had bought from a princess of the Danish royal house. The bribe was accepted and Vati was immediately released from what was called 'protective custody'.

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Nearly seventy years later I learnt that in the early 1970's Vally had applied to the German Government for restitution of the necklace. She employed a German lawyer to act on her behalf. He was successful with the application and a value of DM120,000 was paid by the German government to the lawyer. In the meantime Vally had died and the funds did not ever get paid to the family. Perhaps it was justice as Vally had successfully exchanged the necklace for Oscar.

My mother then went for a short time to Paris and stayed with Dad's cousin, Countess Olga. For many years Mutti had suffered with gallstones and inflammation of the gall bladder. Operations were not very common and one of the outstanding internal organ specialists persuaded my mother that she would be completely cured if she went to Karlsbad (a world famous spa in Czechoslovakia) and took up residence for six months. This fitted well with Vati's plans and meant she would still be near Chemnitz but no longer in Germany.



The purportedly health-giving waters at Karlsbad, drunk regularly five times a day, would supposedly deposit calcium in the gall bladder and slowly encapsulate the stones. This would prevent their movement and, while not necessarily curing the problem, would certainly alleviate the periodic pains.

At that time my brother had finished his studies at the Manchester Institute of Technology and was to accompany one of our technical teams to Japan. I had finished the semester at the *Grunewald Gymnasium* in Berlin and was delegated to accompany my mother to Karlsbad while she 'took the cure'.

In mid 1935 I returned to Chemnitz from school in Berlin and shortly thereafter we were driven to Karlsbad. Mutti and I moved into one of the chic *Kurhäuser* for an extended period. Most hotels were only open during the summer or *Hochsaison*. For long term *Kurgäste* (visitors to the baths) it was fashionable to stay in one of the all year establishments. One of my father's cousins lived near Karlsbad. She had a daughter, Dorli, who I met years later when she was an officer in the Free French army, and later again when she became part of the

staff of the London office of the von Kohorn organization. Dorli, a few months my senior, introduced me to young people of our age group and made my entry into the very 'cliquey' throng of 'locals' considerably easier. One of the favorite winter amusements was skating on the local pond. Music played while couples twirled in pathetic imitations of the magnificent Norwegian Olympic gold medal winner, Sonja Hennie.

Another cousin, Gerry Bibo, went to a junior college at the nearby provincial town of Eger (Cheb). For graduation the father of one of Gerry's schoolmates had presented the class with a small keg of beer. I was too young to drink but permitted to join in the graduation activities. The routine was for each celebrant to consume as much liquid as possible. Disgustingly, they were then placed on their stomachs over the barrel, rolled back and forth until the beer spewed out of their mouths. That was immediately followed by drinking the largest possible amount of beer all over again. Initially I could only watch with the greatest envy and regret that I was not allowed to partake. However the lasting effect was to make me reluctant to drink beer unless politeness made it unavoidable.

I was immediately entered in the local college, the *Real* (pronounced Ray-al) *Gymnasium*. Fortunately they used German as the teaching language but over the next half year I labored, trying to catch up with the rest of my class in the weekly Czech lessons.

Mutti always rose early and at 7am walked slowly through the spa's colonnade. She was equipped with a special drinking glass that enabled her to sip the almost boiling *Sprudel* water through the handle. This performance was repeated at 10 am, 1 pm, 3 pm and finally the day's last, at 7 pm. She also had curative hot mud baths and altogether underwent a very severe cure, only disrupted by short bridge sessions with other equally burdened health seekers.

We usually had lunch and dinner together and I often accompanied my mother on these terribly dull promenades, up one side of the colonnade and down the other. To make things worse she would quiz me while we walked, using one of the schoolbooks, and I had to rattle off the declensions of the impossible Czech nouns, learning the individual words by rote.

The lessons did not help me much, but the hot curative waters did indeed encapsulate my mother's gallstones and from the time she left, six months later, she experienced no difficulties for the





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rest of her life. X-rays showed that her gallstones were indeed surrounded by a hard substance that kept them immobile in the gall bladder. She also regularly subjected herself to being lowered into a tub containing very hot peat mud slurry. This was followed by a cold water high pressure rinse and then being covered, yet again, by very hot compresses of peat mud. A *pummel massage* followed these barbaric cures, but surprisingly enough the visitors to the health resort considered these treatments as curative and willingly paid the large fees charged by the hotels, guesthouses and bathing centers. The hot waters gushing from the earth in several fountains were of different temperature, from cold to almost boiling hot, and contained chemical elements in various combinations, including sodium, manganese, iron, iodine and many other traces.

In the middle of Karlsbad was a recently built multi-storey glass enclosed building erected as a store for the famous Czechoslovakian shoe company Bata. The glass front had been used as a display of their company's slogan. In enormous letters it read:

*Nase Zakaznik-Nase Pan*

That translated as, "Our Customer, Our Master". This remained in my mind for the rest of my life and was of much benefit when dealing with clients all over the world.

Karlsbad had a nine-hole golf course along the Tepl River and a small clubhouse. I was signed up as a junior member; the local pro was engaged to teach me the rudiments of the game and I was presented with my own set of clubs. In those days the shafts were made of wood and the shape of the putter totally different from today. Since the course was short and the land totally flat, there were no caddies and the players carried their own clubs. On one occasion I teed off from the second hole and drove the ball about twenty meters into the rough. Searching for my ball I found a platinum wristwatch in the high grass. I picked it up, completed my game and then turned it over to the club manager. The following afternoon a very well dressed English gentleman came to me and asked whether I had found and turned in the wristwatch. He pulled out his wallet and handed me a crisp United States one hundred dollar bill. That was a lot of money that I properly refused to accept. He assured me that this 'finder's fee' was to pay for my honesty as the watch was very valuable and he had lost it while playing the course the day before. He gave me his name and I took the money. When I told my mother about it, she was most upset that I had taken the money and made me return it to the man who was a guest at



the *Imperial Hotel*. 'Honesty is inborn and not for sale,' I was told by my mother and that was the end of my one hundred dollars.

On weekends many of my schoolmates and I took the bus regularly from Karlsbad to Keilberg and Fichtelberg to

go cross country skiing in the Erzgebirge mountains. Late one afternoon I set off to ski from the bus stop, where I had gotten off on the Czech side, to the hotel in Oberwiesenthal on the German side. I had been too lazy to change into my ski boots and had simply fastened the leather straps that were the ski bindings over my regular shoes. I promptly lost one ski and then lost myself in the forest while trying to look for the lost ski in the dark. Eventually, late that night, in the freezing cold, I finally saw the lights of the village. Half sliding on one ski and struggling in the deep snow with the other foot, I made my way out of the woods. After much searching the next morning I located the lost ski while retracing my tracks. Luckily for me it had not snowed during the night, nor had I been caught by the guards while illegally crossing the border twice without having my passport inspected and stamped.

One day I sat with several friends in the coffee house of the *Keilberg Hotel*, which is located on the Czech side of the border, and we played rummy. We used an old well-fingered set of cards that I had in my rucksack. One of the revenue earners of several European governments was an excise tax placed on all playing cards. By law, the ace of spades had to be marked with a red government stamp showing that the amusement tax had been paid on the set of cards. My set of cards, which I had carried with me from my home in Germany, had not been presented to the Czech tax authorities for stamping. A revenue inspector, who was idly watching us youngsters play cards, suddenly asked us to produce the stamped ace of spades. The authorities held me, and my mother had to pay a fine of ten thousand crowns (about \$500) and I have never played cards since.

In school I was good in some subjects, bad in others. I had failed my history exam and had been given a make-up test. Subject: '*Napoleon's One Hundred Days*'. Providentially, it so happened that there was a movie playing in town that I shall remember until I die. It was with the famous German movie actor Werner Kraus and was called: '*Napoleon's One Hundred Days*'. I specially went to see the film and could have recited it verbatim. The next day, when I was tested, I was so excited I failed again. My professor was not impressed.

My Czech teacher was Prof. Cisar. He was a Czech and hated Germans. I didn't have a chance. Czech is a very difficult language. How can one wrap ones tongue around sentences like: 'Strch prst skrz krk'? The grammar too is almost impossible. Most languages make do with four cases of declinations: nominative, genitive, dative and accusative. The Romans added a fifth and sixth, there is a vocative and ablative in Latin, but the Czech had to have one more, locative, the seventh case. But the declination of nouns in Czech is even further enhanced by sexual refinements into male, female and neuter words, similar to the French and German grammar. But here again the Czechs added a further finesse by dividing the word endings into soft or hard, and furthermore into even different endings for singular or plural. The result is an incredible agglomeration of eighty-four possible word endings, which must be learned by rote unless one is fortunate enough to be born in that language.

Most afternoons we ran, not walked, to the *Sportsfeld* in Fischern to participate

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in gymnastics and various sports. I was a better than average athlete and regularly obtained high awards in my age group. The details were methodically entered into *The Student's Athletic Progress*, which was part of our annual certificate. One day while walking to the school I collapsed on the street. My appendix had burst and I had to have an immediate emergency operation. I had timed it well; it got me out of a Latin and Chemistry exam that day. I took the exams a few days later and chemistry being my favorite subject passed with flying colors.

Mutti played bridge almost every afternoon. One of her favorite places was the *Imperial Hotel* where she would meet three other bridge fanatics. They included Oberinspektor Frank (the police commissioner), who would sit outside in the *Kurgarten*, sipping coffee or tea and nibbling daintily on freshly baked rolls. After school I often came to collect my mother and walk home with her. When I arrived at the *Kurgarten*, as a bribe I was allowed to order a *Doppelschmetten*, a glass of double heavy whipping cream. It had to be consumed with a spoon and this being the days before the 'invention' of the 'cholesterol theory', I was encouraged to fill myself with this delicious poison. That, of course, also gave the foursome time to finish the rubber they were playing when I arrived too early.

My mother frequently used her car to make visits back to Chemnitz. On each return she brought with her the items she most treasured. These must have been stored as eventually they appeared in my parent's home in New York. We also made frequent visits to my grandmother's home in Dürrmaul that was close by. My aunts Sophie and Ella looked after their mother. I loved roast goose and when I visited it was placed on the menu. With their father the head of the Jewish congregation in Dürrmaul, the birds had to be killed in the proper ritualistic way. A *shochet* was called in to dispatch the animals to their maker. Once the deed was done the birds had to be *de-feathered*. My two aunts would sit in the courtyard gossiping together, with two large bags to pluck the two types of feathers, which had to be kept separately. The outer, coarse feathers were used for duvets and the inner, downy fluff for pillows.

I remember when a butter vendor would come carrying his wares in a basket on his back and knock at a window of the living room to display his product. One of the aunts would sample the butter by scraping one of their fingers across the butter and then taste the specimen for saltiness and check it for color.

There were always bottles of mineral water served at meal times. Empty bottles were carried to a near-by spring called *Sauerling*. Filled and corked it was then brought back home to be stored and cooled in the underground cellar. The spring was near the family cemetery which was the one recently visited by a contingent of von Kohorns from the USA.

Another vivid memory was a visit at Easter time, when I joined a group with other Catholic teenagers for midnight mass. The luxurious vestments and the panoply of Easter ritual were indeed always exciting for a youngster to watch.

It was a lucky occurrence when my Aunt Ella's son Gerry came visiting at the

same time. He was a few months older than I and always bragged about his exciting life at high school. I attended his graduation and Bacchanalian outbursts and was wishing I too could drink like his college mates.

My dad's companies in Germany and Austria became more and more involved in the export of machinery, particularly to Japan, and my brother reported back that there was a continued demand for new man-made fiber plants to be established there. With business in Europe slackening, my father decided it was time to travel to Tokyo with my mother, leaving me temporarily in the *Kurhaus* where we had stayed. I was a youngster with my own apartment and little interest in anything other than having fun.

The owner of the '*Kurhaus*', Frau Holub, had warned me a number of times that if I continued with my escapades I would be asked to leave. In the words of Laurel and Hardie: "That was a nice kettle of fish I had gotten myself into".

I formed a 'club'. We were to meet every Saturday, late in the afternoon, in the living room of my apartment. Among the many items left behind by my mother was a large crystal bowl. I decided that the price of admission was a small amount of alcohol that I would pour into the bowl for consumption on 'club night'. During the week the contributions arrived and the bowl was almost filled with an unbelievable concoction. In that tincture there must have been every type of gin, slivovitz, whisky, vodka, sherry and other alcoholic beverage stolen by my accomplices from their respective parents' homes.

Saturday came and my friends started to arrive. None of us were over fifteen. Some of the guys had one drink, the stronger two or more before they were sick and within one hour my apartment was filled with sick boys, most having not quite made it to the toilet before emptying themselves. Sunday brought repercussions. The parents of some of the boys came personally to complain to the owner of the '*Kurhaus*' of the disgusting behavior of the young German boy. Some wrote threatening letters.

Previously I had been caught sneaking out one night with the *Kurhaus*' scullery maid. She was a year older than me and I will always remember her hands smelling of onions, presumably from peeling them all evening. I took her to an inn on the outskirts of town where the proprietor immediately threw us out and then, bad luck, we were caught trying to sneak back into my apartment. I was warned, 'One more mischief and out you go.' The drinking orgy was the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back.

By Monday a telegram had been sent to my dear parents in Japan asking for the immediate removal of their problem child and suggesting a very strict boys *Internat* (boarding school) in Switzerland. The reply did not take long to come back.

"If departure unavoidable authorize Rolf-Stephan's immediate transfer to *Institut auf dem Rosenberg* in St. Gallen".



## Cellulose to Cell Phones

Mrs. Holub, the proprietress of the *Kurhaus* could not wait to get rid of me and within six days I was out of the junior college, packed up, farewelled friends and teachers and on a train to Switzerland.

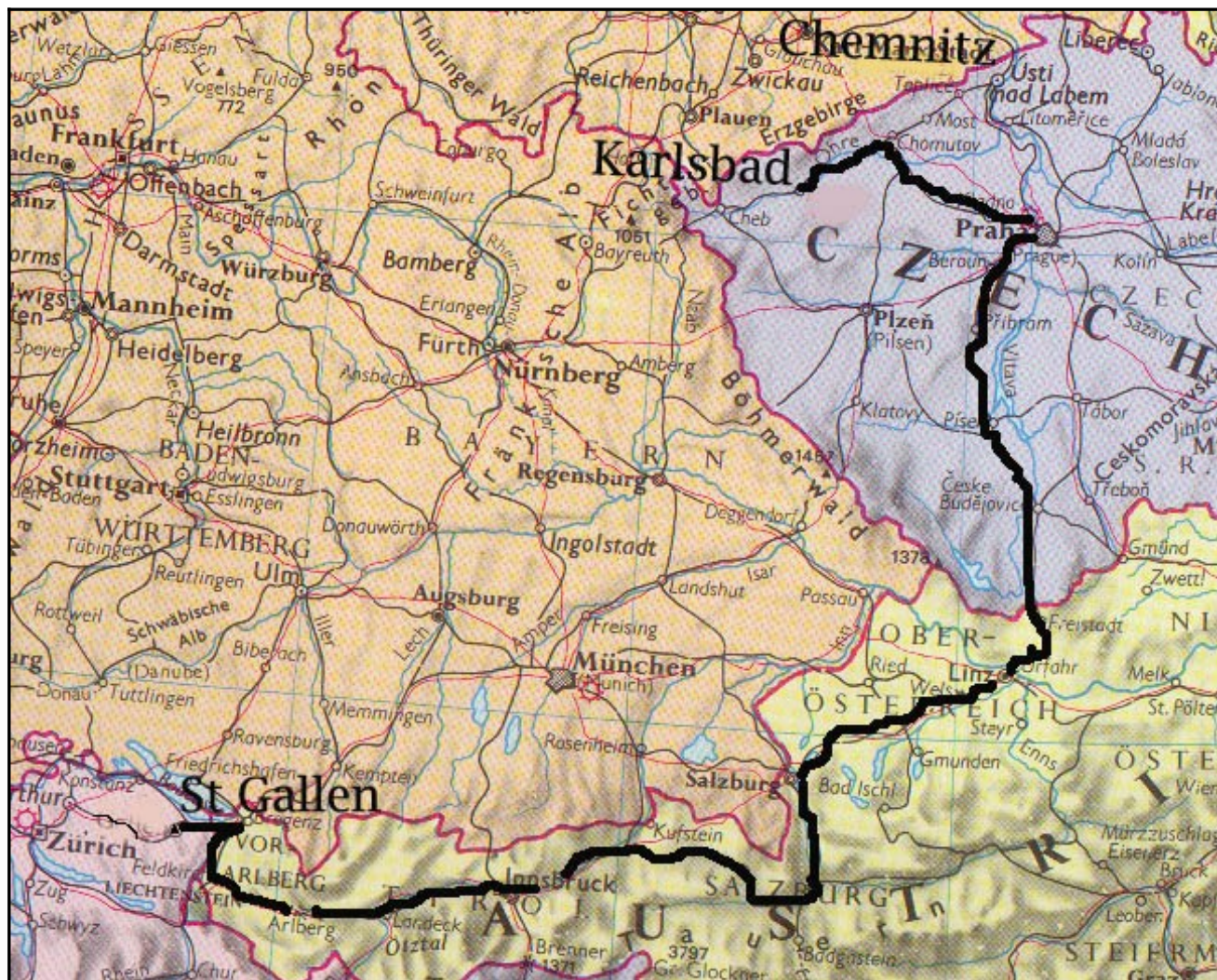
### ST GALLEN

My tenure in Karlsbad had come to such a sudden and disappointing halt I promised myself that I would be a good boy from then on. Karlsbad, being a *Kurstadt*, had excellent train connections to most European capitals. My train traveled via Prague and Innsbruck a round a bout route no doubt intended to keep me out of Germany. St. Gallen, my future home and that of the famous boys' school, originally called *Institut Schmidt* and later renamed *Institute sur la Rosenberg* (on the rose mountain). It was known for its unique multi-lingual curriculum and specialized in students whose parents lived in different parts of the world. To this day it is designed to take care of students, not only during school terms, but also during the holidays. That was essential since many parents lived in far away places that frequently made home travel impossible.

When I arrived by train at the St. Gallen *Bahnhof*, a young student helped with my luggage and the pair of us took a taxi to the school. It was a Sunday and most students were on town leave, one of the most desired privileges. I was assigned a room, later met my roommate and, at Sunday dinner, the rest of the students and of course the teachers and head of the school.

Life in the '*Internat*' was marvelous. I was suddenly taken from a life of utter irresponsibility and complete freedom and immersed into a strictly controlled existence with supervision by a highly trained and motivated teaching staff. I did not choose my teachers. As fortune presented them to me, I accepted and learned from them as they passed through my life. I also learnt that almost everybody could teach me something. Management was strict. Infringements were punished by withdrawal of privileges or withholding of pocket money.

Our prize fellow student was young Farouk, son of King Fuad of Egypt who was crowned only in 1923 when Egypt changed from a Sultanate to a kingdom. Fuad had trained as an ophthalmologist in Munich and wanted Farouk to learn to speak German. He was treated like every other student and was a slim, very good-looking chap. He was younger than I and we older boys did not mix much with the 'young kids'.



Since all students came from considerably affluent backgrounds, one of the most strictly controlled rules was that pupils were restricted to five francs pocket money per week. The funds were paid out on Saturday afternoon after lunch and allowed us to walk into town and splurge on an ice cream or movie. The withdrawal of privileges would also mean the cancellation of weekend town visits, or loss of keeping lights on thirty minutes after lights-out, a perquisite dearly sought after and attainable only by receiving high marks in class.

I loved the newly discovered experience of give and take. If I behaved I was rewarded. When I misbehaved I was punished. We were sometimes given special responsibilities. For example, as one of the older students I was appointed chaperon to one of the younger boys and accompanied him to the nearby dentist. Performing such assigned tasks without any incidents could also earn us cherished thirty minutes lights-out grace.

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Breakfast was a whole meal. The tables were laden with trays of hot buttered toast, bowls of fruit, B rcher M sli (the local cereal), rashers of bacon, soft-boiled eggs and huge pitchers of milk. No coffee or tea. I loved the eggs, and dealt with them by slicing off the top and dipping the toast fingers into the runny yolks. Lunch was equally sumptuous; soup, entr e, main course and sweets or cake for dessert. Evening meals were usually light. As a matter of fact so light that many of us complained of being hungry during the night. I quickly fixed that. I took bread and hid it under my jacket. When I returned to my room, I placed the slices between the coils of the radiator to toast them. Firstly, the radiators were not operating at that time of the year, secondly the very fresh bread took several days to dry and thirdly when I extracted the bread it usually crumbled into small bits. However, the main objective was served. I nibbled on my dried crumbs, the hunger pangs disappeared immediately and, having done something that was strictly forbidden, I felt good all over.

In fact there was plenty of food and I was lucky that most of my eleven tablemates did not like eggs. Since we were expected to finish the food provided on our table I was part of a secret intrigue. They gave me their eggs and I, most delightedly, devoured them all.

The whole school often participated in physical exercises. One day we were loaded on buses and, with climbing instructors, taken to the foot of the *S ntis*, a nearby mountain, to climb the beginner's side. We were roped together for safety and discussed how difficult the descent would be after we had attained the summit. After several hours of what we thought was hard work we finally reached the top plateau only to be greeted by the school buses that had driven up a road on the other side of the mountain and were waiting to take us back to *The Institute*.

Once a month, on a Sunday, we had *Th  Dansant* with the students of the reciprocal *Girls' Institute*. We were dressed in our dark blue suits, shoes highly polished, and wearing white gloves, they, in pink or white dresses, turning their eyes up to the sky when we shuffled up to them, made a bow, and asked for a dance. Partners were changed after every dance and we selected one girl after another from the lines, which were reformed against the wall. The chaperoned young ladies were whisked away at five o'clock sharp, much too short a period of time to form any close attachment or get up to any mischief.

Shortly after the climbing exercise I felt very poorly and, when the housemother came to check on me, it was discovered that I had quite a high temperature. The Herr Doktor came to examine me further and after some whispered conferences with the housemother I was told to pack a few things; I would go to the hospital for further checks. Soon enough I was told that I had scarlet fever and that, as a result of my infection, the whole school had to be quarantined. I spent five long weeks in my hospital room with only a nursing sister, with a mask over her mouth and nose, coming to see me to bring the meals.

A doctor examined me daily, probed and looked into my throat, and assured me that it would not be too long before I could return to the *Rosenberg*. I needed of

course reading material but was told that everything I touched had to be burned in the hospital ovens. Books would have been a terrible waste, so the sister in her wisdom suggested old magazines. I soon had stacks of these in my room and, being interested in aristocracy and nobility, started a collection of clippings of members of royal and ruling houses, which I pasted in three notebooks. These, I was assured, could be disinfected after leaving the hospital. The magazines were in French, German, English and other languages and allowed me to cut hundreds of pictures of past and present emperors, kings, archdukes, and princes as well as lesser rulers. My books of clippings were disinfected and from time to time I used them to look up information after my family had moved to New York.

In late 1936 I was called to the *Direktion*. The Herr Direktor informed me that he had received a letter from my parents and that I was to join them in Japan. He handed me a thick package of papers that included a letter of instructions from my brother explaining how to get to Yokohama and a number of different travel tickets. There was also a letter of admonition of what not to do from my mother.

I could hardly wait to get to my room, shared with another student, to read my mail, study the tickets, and look up my itinerary in the school atlas.

The first instruction from my brother told me to get in touch with one of my parents' close friends in nearby Zürich who would help me if I had any problems. Herr Brann owned a chain of department stores in Switzerland and had been an important customer of my father's carpet factories. I was to write to his Zürich address and he had been advised of my travel.

There was a voucher from an *agence de voyage* in Yokohama in favor of the Schweizer Bundesbahn requesting them to issue to the bearer one railway ticket first class from St. Gallen to Venice via Zürich and Milano. There was also a steamer ticket from Lloyd Triestino for travel from Venice to Shanghai and one from the Nippon Yusen Kaisha from Shanghai to Yokohama. Reservations had been made at a hotel in Venice.

The date of travel was not too far off. My brother's handwritten letter covered many double pages and detailed the many steps I should take on the long journey. After finishing his studies at Manchester he had traveled to Japan from England a number of years earlier. I was only in my early teens and obviously needed precise instructions. 'Once you arrive there, you will do this..... when you get there you need to make sure that.... whom to tip and how much.'

The list seemed endless and I already dreamt of Egypt and India and China. My school chums studied the envelope's contents with me. The Institut had only foreign students and with mates from many parts of the world, I sought advice from them.

"When you get to India you will need a gun. There are many wild animals and you need to protect yourself," assured one friend.



## Cellulose to Cell Phones

"When you get to Port Said you must go to that place where a woman 'does it' with a donkey." That was hard for me to visualize but it was an older boy's recommendation, so certainly something to be kept in mind. I added to my brother's instructions, "Get a gun against the wild animals in India. Watch a woman 'getting it' from a donkey in Port Said."

The letter to the *Direktion* had included money for the voyage that was counted out to me. My parents had been generous and I received several hundred francs 'for emergency use'. Obviously the procurement of a gun was an emergency and the next afternoon saw me, accompanied by a number of eagerly helpful teen-aged school mates, descending on a highly recommended gun and fishing gear store.

What gun would he recommend to shoot wild animals in India? After very lengthy negotiations the proprietor had talked us out of a gun, which he refused to sell to 'children', and suggested that if he could inspect the ticket to Yokohama, he might be persuaded to sell me a lady's pistol of small caliber for personal protection.

Obviously a small caliber pistol was better than nothing when attacked by a tiger or elephant in India and I promised to front up with my tickets. The next afternoon I presented my documents and was told that the pistol would be handed to me at the railway station when getting on the train. I paid for the weapon and a package of twenty shells and immediately felt much safer.

Henry's letter of instructions also included a section on what I can today only describe as dress code. "Traveling first class requires that you dress in a tuxedo every night except on the first night out of a port and the last night before arriving at a port." Obviously I would need a tuxedo and the instruction from my parents, "If you need any help contact Herr Brann," shot through my mind. I certainly needed help and sent a postcard to Herr Julius Brann and he telephoned me a few days later.

"Is there any little thing I can help you with?" he asked. There certainly was.

"I need a tuxedo for the voyage."

Herr Brann had no children but obviously knew where teenage priorities lay. Instructions went out to the tailor of the Brann department store in St. Gallen and after measuring and several fittings I was presented with a beautiful dinner jacket with silk lapels and black trousers with silk stripes down the sides.

I spent some time obtaining my visa from the Japanese Consulate and arranging to have the actual tickets for the journey delivered to me. I needed passport photographs, a certificate of good health, a statement from the school attesting to the fact that I was a person of good character. Time just flew by.

The 27 October 1936 was the day of departure. I said my good-byes to the teachers. The headmaster asked me whether I knew the distance to Japan. I advised that I knew it was many thousands of kilometers. He wished me luck and said: "*Jede Reise beginnt mit einem kurzen Schritt*" (every journey begins



with a short step). I always remembered that saying and applied it to many jobs I had to undertake and feared to start.

The large suitcases, properly labeled 'NOT WANTED ON THE VOYAGE', had been dispatched to Lloyd Triestino in Venice and, with a number of my school chums, I waited at the railway station to get on the train to Zürich. Last minute suggestions from an Italian classmate recommended that I must have at least one meal of fresh scampi in Venice. An appropriate hand motion accompanied the recommendation. It consisted of kissing the tip of the index finger and thumb to indicate how delicious the food would be after the school fare. The proprietor of the gun shop, true to his word, handed me a sealed package and admonished me not to open it until I had left Switzerland.

I entered the compartment and stowed my several small suitcases above the seat. A post card from Herr Julius Brann had advised that he would expect me that evening in Zürich. That meant taking an afternoon train from St Gallen. It was due to depart at 16:49. Swiss timetables were always precise and trains always on time. Several of my friends had come to the station to see me off and a moment later the train pulled slowly out of the *Bahnhof* and my journey had begun. As the train rolled along the platform they loudly intoned the school-chant 'Himalaya Tschimm Tschim.'

I arrived at 1811 in Zürich and took a taxi to the office of Herr Brann's large department store. After a few minutes he received me very affably and having thanked him for my dinner jacket I was told to check into the *Hotel Habis-Royal* as his guest. He handed me an envelope with 'a few *Fränkli*' and bid me a safe journey. I returned to the railway station, picked up my luggage and had dinner in the hotel dining room. There was an advertisement for the premier of the film 'Broadway Melodies'. I love films and thoroughly enjoyed it. The thrill of going to a movie in the evening, by myself, made it all very exciting. Immediately after the show I returned to the hotel, made my first entry in my new 'daily diary' and went to sleep.

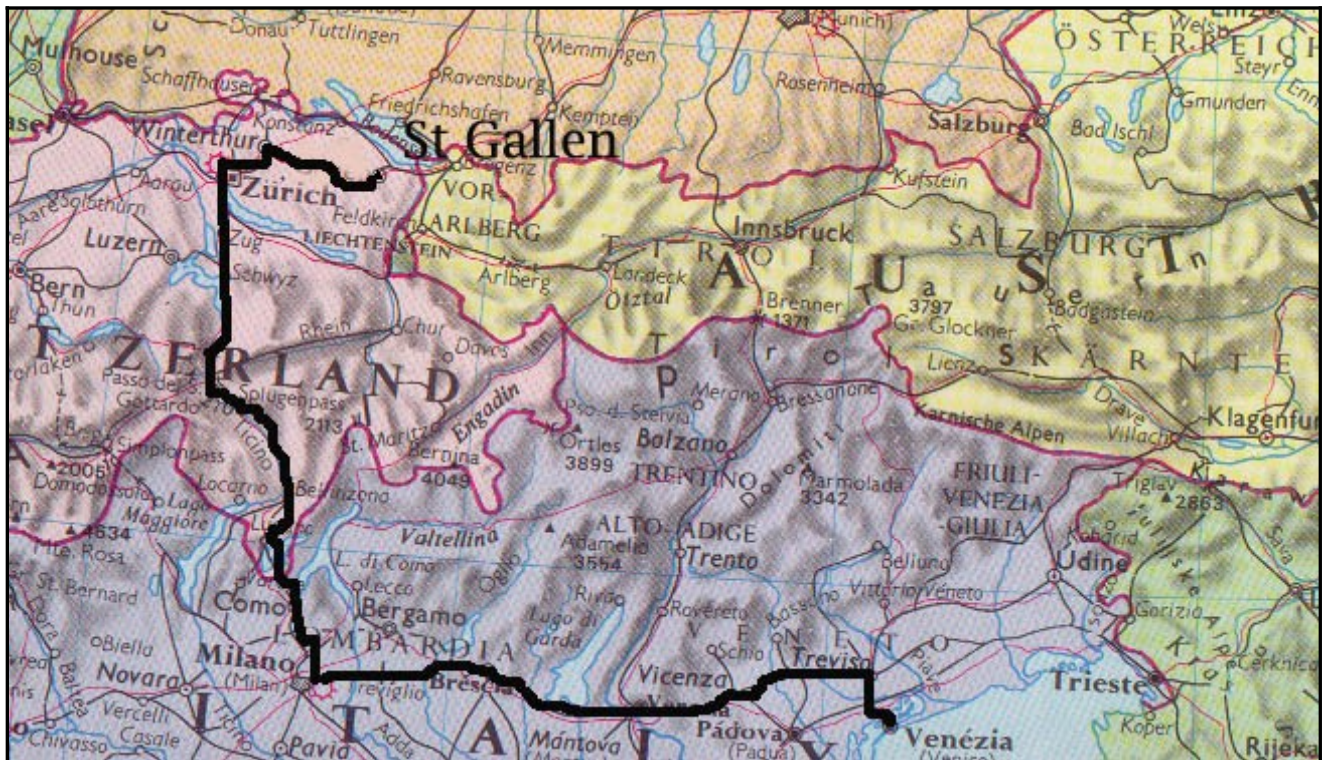
In the morning I walked around town for two hours. I thought it would be a grand adventure to find Lake Zürich without seeking help. Reality was that the lake was hard to miss. In the afternoon I booked to go on a city tour. After the tour I attended the formal Five O'clock tea. My diary reads: "the train to Milano does not leave until 23:47. Enough time to go to another movie".

I decided to be at the station at eleven. Herr Brann had promised to inform my parents that I was well on my way. He also said to remember all instructions. "Don't talk to strangers; be polite to the customs inspectors at the border. Explain that you are traveling alone, show them the passport and explain that you are catching a ship to the Orient from Venice". Herr Brann's farewell gift of an envelope containing a few franks was in reality one hundred franks, a fortune in those days equating to twenty weeks of my usual pocket money.

The directions were received and immediately forgotten. I explained to all who would listen that I was on my way to Japan. I would watch donkeys 'doing it' to women in Port Said and would have to fight wild animals in India. I had little

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concept of what my fellow travelers must have thought of that obnoxious youngster. The guideline of not talking to strangers was not for me.



At four in the morning we reached the Swiss/Italian border. I presented my passport, explained that I was on my way to Japan and was waved through customs with a friendly smile. I could hardly wait for the train to start to roll and make sure I had left Switzerland. I took my precious package out of the suitcase. God only knows what I would have done if the customs inspector had asked me to open it. I took the parcel to the toilet. Without a knife I had to undo the knots and finally, with great difficulty, opened the wrapping. Each knot had been sealed with red wax that had to be broken, one by one. Finally the wrapping paper was off and in a neat velvet bag with a drawstring was the prize. A gleaming silver-plated pistol and a sealed package of shells. The pistol went into my trouser pocket and the shells into my jacket. I was not yet ready to load the pistol; I would do that once I was in my hotel room in Venice.

It was six o'clock in the morning when we rolled into the enormous railway station in Milano. I gave a porter five lira to take my two suitcases from the Zürich train to the one for Venice. He mumbled what sounded like 'porco'. The standard rate was three liras for a suitcase. I took it for 'thanks' and smiled sweetly. Once again I changed trains successfully and got on the right one for Venice and arrived there a few hours later. It had all been very exciting. By now I considered myself an experienced traveler and called for a porter to take my suitcases to what I had thought would be a taxi. The taxi turned out to be a gondola and a quarter of an hour later we were gliding alongside the canal platform of my hotel, the *Royal Danieli*.

My room was ready and as soon as the porter left I quickly loaded my pistol. It was a flat automatic with a magazine that held six shells. It was easy to figure out what went where and I could now return the loaded pistol, with the safety catch on, to my trouser back pocket.

I found the city terribly dull. In the afternoon I took a four-hour boat tour and almost froze to death. We visited several lagoons but the only one I found



interesting was Torcello where the streets of the village were full of laundry hanging out of windows and children playing in the dirt. On Burano we visited an old church. On Murano was the famous glass factory. Compared to the prices in Switzerland everything seemed much cheaper. Before the end of the tour we visited *San Marcos Square* and fed the pigeons.

My next important job was to try out the new tuxedo. I knew from my own home that Vati always wore a stiff fronted shirt and separate stiff wing collars fastened with studs. I needed a bow tie and cufflinks and patent leather shoes. There was still enough time to go shopping so off I went on the narrow walks along the canals. The hotel porter had given me directions to a reputable shoe shop and chemiserie that I found without problem. The only difficulty arose in finding a 'camicia' and a shirt collar my size. They had no trouble serving customers of heroic Italian proportions but clients of a youthful size presented some difficulty. Finally the proprietor found two shirts that he pronounced as '*perfezione*'. He also included in the sale studs and cufflinks and, after paying in Swiss francs (in those days most foreign currencies were readily acceptable) I left, deeply disappointed that I could not take my purchases with me. I was told it was not appropriate to carry my own parcels and assured that they would be in my hotel almost before I got back myself.

Once again my trust in humanity was completely vindicated and by the time I reached the *Royal Danieli* the packages had arrived and, in accordance with the instructions contained in my brother's letter, I correctly tipped the pageboy who brought them to my room.

With all the excitement of arrival, checking in, loading the pistol, taking the tour and going shopping I had missed out on luncheon and was looking forward to dinner. The evening meal at my boarding school was always served at half past six, on the dot. It was now six o'clock and after a hot bath I began to dress. The new shoes were gleaming and the stiff shirt easy to slip on. The studs



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were inserted with many difficulties and after several trials and a number of failures, I was finally ready, properly dressed in the new tuxedo, shirt, bow tie and pumps and a handkerchief in the breast pocket - no doubt a picture of youthful elegance.

I marched into the dining room and was the only person dressed in a dinner jacket. When I had completed my dinner, I went to the recommended 'night club'. I was told to come back an hour later. They did not open at such an early hour. At 21:30 I returned. There was not another soul in the place. Then came a sudden rush of customers! I counted three beside myself. I could have died of boredom. Only the superb *scampi gratiné* saved the night for me. Once again I had no difficulty finding my way back across the canal bridges to the hotel and was soon fast asleep after a long day.

I spent three nights in Venice. Much of the next day was devoted to writing postcards and letters as well as taking a long walk. I was in bed by nine o'clock and went down to the breakfast room at eleven o'clock the next day. Perhaps I was growing?

After breakfast or lunch (the term brunch had not been coined) I went shopping for a laundry bag and, as a souvenir of Venice, an embossed leather writing pad. After lunch I again went shopping for a tropical helmet and light shirts to wear with the dinner jacket while in the tropics. While returning to the hotel I got totally lost, found myself on the wrong side of a canal and had to hire a gondola to take me back to the *Royal Danieli*.

This was the eve of my big journey. The tropical helmet was duly delivered and if somebody could have watched me, he would have wondered at the strange young man who wore the cork hat to bed.

## GOODBYE EUROPE

My brother's instructions had said that I should pack early and be taken with my luggage to the ship. Also to make sure I had my tickets and passport handy and to seek out the purser of the *Conte Rosso*, the steamer that was to take me to Hong Kong. As instructed I had changed all remaining money into English currency and gave the purser five pounds when I went aboard. All went well. I was shown to my port side cabin, numero 205, and found the large trunks which contained all my personal belongings, originally sent from Switzerland and which I had tagged *Wanted On The Voyage*. Then I went to the purser's office, asked the attendant to have my passport and money locked away and also gave him a five pound note. 'A su servizio, Barone' and the assignment of a private table and a deckchair in a protected corner of the promenade deck were the result. This was my teenage introduction to the power of 'the oil that greases the wheels', another lesson that I remembered for the rest of my life.

Hale and victorious I was safely ensconced aboard. There was a telegram from my parents waiting for me, wishing me *Bon Voyage*. I arranged my private



cabin the way I wanted, unpacked the 'Wanted on Voyage' luggage and looked forward to the great adventure. The only thing that bothered me was an evil smell pervading the entire ship. Once we had left Venice it slowly dissipated.

We were free to visit most parts of the ship before the departure. There were of course many Italians and Indians but mainly Asiatics. I watched as they loaded eleven cars into the ship's hold. After departure the doors between the different classes were locked and there were only a handful of passengers in first class. I would have preferred second class where I had seen more young people.

My first departure by ship was of course an event never to be forgotten. It was five o'clock when we slowly pulled away with hundreds of little boats and gondolas dancing around us. Military marches and opera melodies were being played by the ship's band. Third class was crowded with Italian soldiers, enroute to their colonies. I went to the radio room and sent a wireless message to my parents in Yokohama telling them that I was safely on my way. Dinner was fantastic. There were so many dishes I could not make up my mind and, on the advice of my steward, had a little from at least ten different items on the menu. After dinner I went into the cinema and watched an Italian film with German sub-titles.

Next morning at seven, tea and toast were served in bed. I was assured that a proper breakfast would be available in the dining room and I had no trouble adjusting to boat life. I tried the enormous variety of dishes featuring eggs in every style, kidneys, steak, many kinds of freshly baked bread, fruit of every description, juices as well as coffee and tea. All the beverages I had not been permitted at school.

At two o'clock we arrived at Brindisi. I joined a group taking a two hour tour around the ancient city. In spite of the abundance of fruit at the ship's breakfast table, I could not resist the temptation to buy an enormous melon for 5 liras. Later, after quietly cruising past the Greek islands, the ship headed for Port Said.

In the evening I attended the nightly ship's dance with some of the Italians who did not mind having a very lonely youngster tag along.

Two days later the ship reached the African coast. I read in the ship's paper the latest news of the Italian conquests in their war against Abyssinia and its emperor Haile Sellasie. Little did I realize at the time that I would in later life meet the emperor.

While playing quoits and shuffleboard I had met a few of the other passengers, including several Italians on their way to Massawa (Mitsiwa), the site of Italy's latest military successes. One was a young wife going to rejoin her husband after a lengthy separation. He was an army medical doctor stationed in Asmara. She was not averse to dancing with a very young man, probably following the precept that a teenage man was better than no man. I also met a Chinese naval officer who had been sent for training to Italy, was now returning

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to Shanghai and had a nearby cabin. We played endless games of ping-pong, that being one of the most favored diversions for the passengers.

The afternoon was very hot and the ship's lido pool was filled. It was only half full when I jumped in wanting to be the first swimmer in the water. I stayed in for one and a half hours until a steward warned me to get out of the sun.

My Chinese friend and I decided to visit Port Said together. I was delighted to have an older person with me to find the place where that donkey would be 'doing it' to a woman. With most of the other passengers I had stayed on deck until four in the morning to watch the entry into the Suez canal. Then we went back for a swim in the lit-up lido pool.

After arrival and disembarkation we went through a customs and passport barrier with English and Egyptian officers. One big sign proclaimed ALL WEAPONS MUST BE DECLARED. What a quandary. Should I sneak my pistol by the customs and run the risk of being caught and fined or possibly even arrested, or should I declare it? Prudence won out and when it was my turn to show my passport I declared that I was carrying a weapon. The officer asked to see it, I handed it over, it was confiscated pending my departure and the case was closed. So much for carrying a pistol for protection.

My Chinese friend and I then enquired where we could see 'the donkey doing it to a woman'. More bad luck. It must have been the off season. Either there was no woman or donkey available, or maybe we simply did not look like the right type of customers, but the upshot was - no woman was being done by a donkey.

However, my Chinese friend did have his uses. He explained that we would need lighter clothes while passing through the hot climes and for eveningwear the ubiquitous monkey jacket. Monkey jacket! Never heard of it. In the tropics and the Far East the dinner jacket, or tuxedo, was never worn. *De rigueur* dress code for the male was the monkey jacket, an offshoot of the short white military coat.

It was now well after midnight, but this being a ship visit day, all shops in Port Said were wide open and brightly lit. We found the highly recommended general store *Simon Artz* that, among other things, specialized in men's fashions and even promised to custom tailor a complete suit by the time the ship sailed in the morning. We stayed with our resolve and purchased almost only what we came for. A tropical helmet for my friend, (since I already had one), and two monkey jackets each, one to be laundered and starched while we wore the other. Of course we also had to buy the proper white dress shoes, white silk socks, white suspenders and a black cummerbund to be worn beneath the monkey jacket.

We left the store well satisfied with our purchases and returned to the customs barrier. I recovered the pistol and went back aboard *Conte Rosso*.

With an Egyptian pilot aboard, the ship sailed at six in the morning. It steamed slowly through the barely one hundred miles of the Suez Canal connecting Port

Said with Port Suez at its southern end. There was a very short stop to discharge our pilot and then we entered the Gulf of Suez leading towards the Red Sea with all its heat and sand-laden wind.

During the day we passed into the Red Sea and it was as hot as I had been told. That night I wore my monkey jacket at the '*cotillion*' dance after which I changed into my bathing trunks to swim. I stayed in the water for two hours and that was about the same time as I had been in the dining room. From then on, after meals I went to my cabin and took cold showers that could, if one wished, be adjusted to use salt water.

Early in the morning it was already hot. I decided to follow the suggestion made by other passengers to sleep in the afternoon during the greatest heat and stay up later in the evening when it cooled down somewhat.

We passed many small islands and two days later on November seventh arrived at Massawa, an Eritrean port occupied by Italy after the war with Abyssinia. It was afternoon when we arrived. All the Italians left the ship and *Conte Rosso* seemed quite empty. I wore my tropical helmet for the first time and was surprised how cool it kept my head. I wondered why Italy had taken Massawa. It was one of the hotter spots on earth reaching as high as 50° Celsius in the summer.

The next day was a short run across the Straits of Bab el Mandeb to Aden, a small British outpost on the bottom of Arabia. Aden was not exactly designed for tourists and the few boats that call at the port try to compensate for the bleakness of southern Arabia with various deck games and on board entertainment.

Mun Shui Ting ("call me either Mun or Ting" - it made no difference to him what name I used) and I decided to return to the ship as soon as possible. There was to be a camel race outside the fort in the afternoon, specially arranged for our entertainment. We felt that we had had enough of sand and heat and looked forward to the comparative cool of the public rooms of *Conte Rosso*.

The food on the steamer continued to be wonderful. There were dozens of courses for each meal. All the delicacies of the finest European gastronomy were available. From one kilo cans of Persian first quality malosol caviar in their blue tins, to the finest meats, poultry and fish, all stored in the ship's huge refrigerators.

I enjoyed a daily feast of soups, appetizers, entrées, main courses, salads and desserts. *Conte Rosso* and the *Conte Verde* were the flagships of the Lloyd Triestino line and opulence of food in the first class dining rooms of all the major lines were legendary. We were told the Italian chefs of the flagships always tried to outdo each other with ever more fabulous designs of sculptured ice figures, decorated platters, cakes and tarts piled high with crystallized fruits. Heaven for the average passenger; an explosion of bliss for a former boarding school student who could gorge himself to his heart's content without anyone uttering a restraining word.

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This being my first trip on a steamer, almost everything we did was new. For example, there were quoits played with rope rings that we threw over wooden pegs. Another was shuffleboard, which consisted of wooden disks that we tried to slide over numbers painted on the deck. Then there were horse races with the passengers betting on 'horses' that were moved forward by a steward in accordance with the numbers thrown with dice. There was betting on the total number of miles traveled in the past twenty-four hours with the winner collecting a handsome sum of money or a bottle of the finest brandy.

After Aden we reached the Indian Ocean. It was a wonderful blue color, just like the posters, but I suffered badly with sunburn. I had a headache and very sore skin. I met two young ladies from Berlin and we sat together during the movie performance. Because of the heat and the small number of passengers the film was shown outside on the promenade deck. After the nightly dance, an Indian, who sat at my table, and I visited the second class. They had a Gypsy band in costumes playing that, two days later, performed in first class. I had a talk with them in German. They were on their way to Shanghai for an eighteen month engagement at the *Paramount Hotel*. I thought them much better than the tuxedo attired musical band in the first class. When the Gypsies played to the first class passengers they were a great success.

Other diversions included driving golf balls from the stern and skeet shooting at clay pigeons catapulted over the ship's aft deck. *Conte Rosso* had numerous rifles for its passengers. An Indian prince on our journey traveled with his own servants, including his gun bearer, who loaded and handed the rifle to the maharaja during our skeet shooting championship. The steward told me that there was no land between us and the South Pole, only the sea and eventually the Antarctic ice.

In the afternoon I took my photos to the camera kiosk for developing and then had five o'clock tea in the lounge. I had an appointment with the barber at six and then got dressed in my monkey jacket for dinner. That night Mun Shui Ting and I ate Chinese food and he taught me to use chopsticks. Later was the usual dance but there were no young ladies in first class and second-class passengers were not permitted 'upstairs'.

Three days from Bombay the regular rolling of the ship changed to pitching. The rise and fall made me feel very dizzy. The ocean swells were like small mountains and the *Conte Rosso* climbed up one side and then slid down the other. Most of the hard work on *Conte Rosso* was done by *lascars*. They were Indians and dressed in a brown uniform, not like the Italian sailors who were dressed in blue. Many were busy cleaning up after the passengers suffering from the dreaded *le mal de mer*. Even the water in the lido pool had been slung out and had to be refilled. The temperature also dropped considerably.

The sea continued to be very unruly and two of the musicians had to rush out during a performance.

During the next day there were shrieks from women when the ship was pushed sideways, slammed down and suddenly reared its bow skyward. The stewards



were fastening all furniture and removing breakables from the tables. There were hardly any passengers to talk to. It seems a storm crossed our path. The dining room noticeably emptied. The blue ocean had turned gray and looked very unfriendly. I went as far towards the bow as I was permitted. There were a great many dolphins swimming alongside and they seemed to be racing us. Some were way ahead and jumping back and forth across our course.

I hoped the weather would improve for our Bombay visit. I looked forward to meeting the representatives of our Indian operations. Mr. Watson, together with his brother, represented a number of English textile machinery manufacturers in the Indian sub-continent. They each spent six months in India and then switched with the other brother and spent six months in England.

When the steward woke me in the morning, we were already tied up at the Alexandra Dock in Bombay. Immediately after passing through customs I went on to the pier. There were no other youngsters traveling first-class and I was quickly identified and loaded into a chauffeur driven Wolsey belonging to Mr. Watson of Duncan Stratton. We drove to his office at 5 Bank Street and I was introduced to our Bombay staff. I was then taken to Malabar Hills to view the famous '*Towers of Silence*'. They were the burial place of the Parsees and buzzards circled the strange structures where the corpses were left.

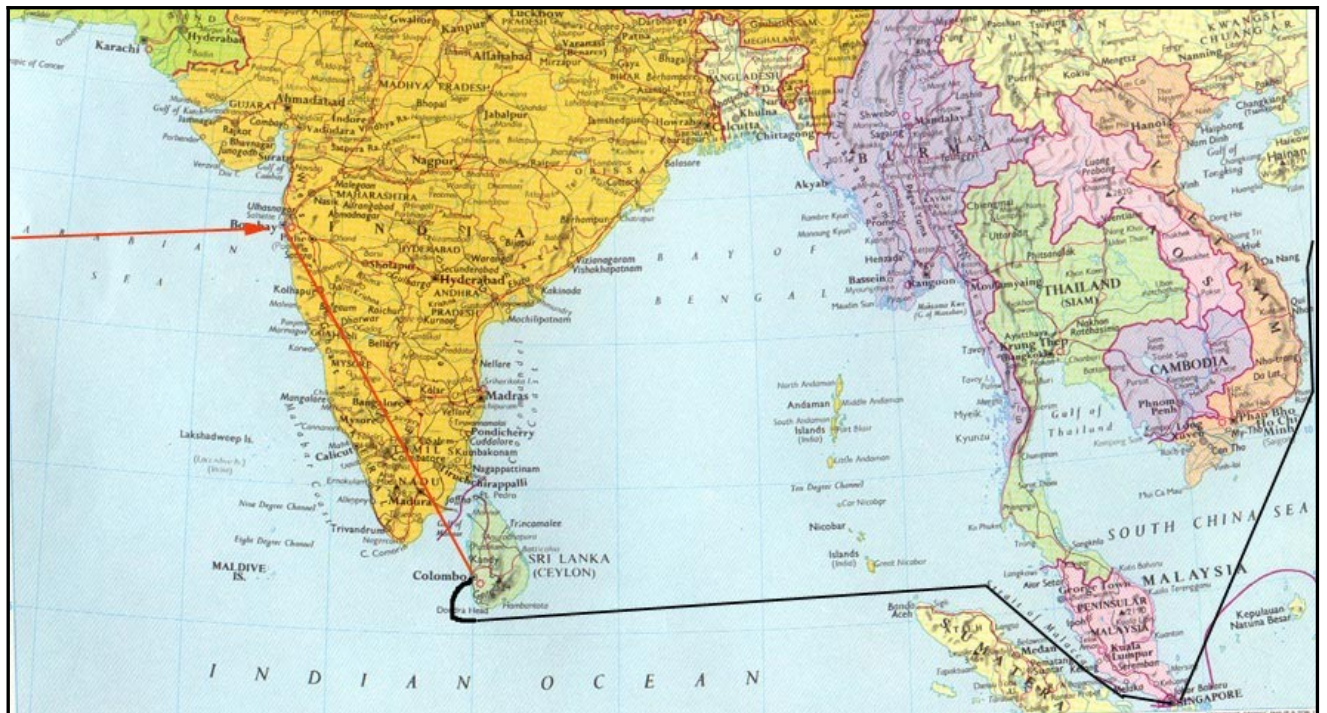
Later, intent on finding a cool drink, we went to the European Swimming Club that was strictly off-limits to all Indian, Oriental or non-European, which I found strange. Then we went on to the bazaar to shop for a souvenir. I bought a 'hookah', an Indian water pipe fashioned from silver and much too large to conveniently carry on to Japan. At the Gymkhana Club we took 'tiffin' (lunch), served by white coated servants. They answered to the shout of BEARER, (usually pronounced bearaaah) and, while saluting, would enquire from the *burrah sahib* what they should serve, all the while wobbling their heads from side to side. In spite of the heat we had a hot soup called mulligatawny. It was made with mutton and curry, very spicy and, to make it edible, I had to squeeze lime juice over it quite liberally. Mr. Watson phoned the Lloyd Triestino office to check on the departure time and was told we had plenty of time and not to worry.

We should have worried. Instead we took our time, drove around some more and when we arrived at Alexandra Dock my ship had left. Mr. Watson was very worried about what my father would do with a son stranded in Bombay. He made immediate inquiries and learned that there was a seat available on a mail flight to Colombo the following day. I stayed at Mr. Watson's home over night and was taken to the airport in the morning.

The plane took off from a grass strip early in the morning and landed a couple of times en route to Colombo. It was a small aircraft with room for about five passengers and mostly mailbags. It was a long flight and I arrived at the Colombo military airstrip near nightfall. A truck took me into the city and I gazed in wonder at the coconut palms that lined the roadway. The *Conte Rosso* was

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in port and I was happy to go back aboard and be able to shower and have fresh clothes.



The next day I was able to inspect Colombo with Mun Shui. I bought a mask, carved from coconut shell. Then Mun Shui and I were dragged into a jeweler's store. The owner tried for half an hour to sell me, without success, a diamond. In the end Mun Shui bought two ebony elephants. We took photos and returned to the *Conte Rosso* that was surrounded by small boats, mostly selling woodcarvings. I bought two bookstands cut from ironwood and a small model of the native boats. The departure was at six thirty on the evening of 14 November. The evening entertainment was a movie, but unfortunately again a film that I had already seen in Switzerland.

The distance from Colombo to Singapore is about three thousand five hundred kilometers. The weather changed continuously. Some rain, a few minutes later brilliant sunshine, but it remained continuously steaming hot. I spent most of the time in the lido pool even while it rained. In later years I traveled many times from India to Australia by air but no flying trip ever equaled the enjoyment I felt when moving at the leisurely pace of a luxury liner from India to the Far East.

The weather completely deteriorated on 16 November. There were two tremendous cloudbursts. I picked up my photos taken in Bombay and Colombo from the onboard photographer. I read a lot in English to improve my vocabulary. In the evening we could see the coast of Sumatra. We continuously passed lighthouses.

The following day was Sunday and the church service was in English. At least I could understand most of the service. I again wrote letters and postcards to my former schoolmates to be posted in Singapore. The sea was calm and in the evening the only diversion was a movie. There were no partners left to play ping-pong.

Mun Shui Ting and I ordered Chinese food for dinner. He again insisted I eat with chopsticks and ordered one course after another. There were dishes from Hunan, Shanghai and Canton. Being young, with flexible fingers, I had no difficulty in mastering the art of eating with the Chinese implements. I later bought myself a beautiful ebony box with a sliding top containing an ivory pair that I still own.

On 18 November the ship arrived in Singapore at eight in the morning. The entrance to the harbor was absolutely breath taking. There were so many small islands, everything was green and there were trees everywhere. After passing through customs I was on my own. Mun Shui Ting had friends in Singapore and disappointingly, I could not accompany him.

Luckily two Viennese ladies took pity on me and we hired a taxi and drove for two hours through the town. In the Botanical Gardens we fed the monkeys. Then two Malaysians performed a trick with the sudden growth of a coconut into a tree. We had hoped to see the famous trick of a young boy climbing up a rope rising from a basket and disappearing into the sky above. The performer was not available that day.

We visited the 'tiger car' owned by the Chinese who founded the Tiger Balm Company and who also donated the *Temple of the Thousand Saints* with the figures reproduced in concrete and gaudily painted. I saw my first coolies and jinrikshaws, street hawkers selling food and tourist goods and became slowly immersed in Asian culture. Many of the women were wearing sarongs and Chinese women were wearing cheongsams, with slits on the sides. A lot of the men wore putty colored jodhpurs called riding breeches, worn with boots. We went to the famous *Raffles Hotel* and admired the fan shaped palm trees planted at its entrance.

I wanted to buy a souvenir but in four shops was only shown Japanese made wares. I could buy those when I arrived in Yokohama. Finally, in desperation, I found a small Malay shop and bought a 'smoking set'. It consisted of a tray with a stand holding a packet of cigarettes, a box of matches and an ashtray, all carved out of coconut shell. On the way back to the port I purchased a packet of Chinese cigarettes to go with my smoking set. We were still early and, walking back and forth on the pier, I bought a hand-carved riding crop made of animal horn with leather loops for the hand at the whip end. The steamer sailed at one in the afternoon with twenty new passengers in first class. The steward said that, as there were not enough passengers for a dance, we would have a concert.

The next day another storm hit us. From Singapore we sailed north east through the South China Sea. Most passengers were sea sick, even my friend Mun Shui Ting failed to appear in the dining room. After dinner we played 'horse races', but the ship was tossed about so much that the stewards could not keep the 'horses' in place. Several women passengers screamed in fear every time the steamer's bow buried itself after having reared up. After the races I stayed in the lounge until I finished my book. When I looked up I was

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alone. The other passengers had left and the waiters were removing the tablecloths and looking at me very angrily.

On 20 November the cabin steward brought me a radiogram that my brother had sent me. I did not understand the message "Meeting you Hong Kong". What did that mean? Were we to continue together on the *Conte Rosso*? Was he taking me to another steamer? Or was I to continue by myself? To be on the safe side I packed my two suitcases. If I continued on the *Conte Rosso* I could always unpack.

The weather continued very rough and the ship was thrown about. One of the stewards fell against a porcelain washbowl. He broke and cut his arm very deeply and had to be operated on immediately. At dinner I was almost alone in the dining room as most passengers were seasick. The weather did not improve the next day.

The ship finally docked at eleven o'clock. The night of arrival was the best time. The city was all lit up and there were huge floodlights on the pier. I recognized Henry from the distance. He recognized me at the same moment and waved. After we had docked he came aboard and we made arrangements to have my luggage that had been stowed below decks, taken down to the pier. Then we went to the dining room and ordered some drinks.

Henry had come across from Japan to Shanghai to meet our representative for China, Mr. Tom Evans. A business appointment with a member of the Sung family in Canton coincided with my arrival in Hong Kong and my brother had decided to have me spend some time with him.

He left after midnight and, awakening me next morning, we breakfasted together. We went to the Lloyd Triestino pier and arranged three coolies and a man in uniform to take my fifteen pieces of luggage to the offices of the Nippon Yusen Kaisha. The man in uniform insisted that we had to go to the *Peninsula Hotel* otherwise he would have to take back his coolies who only worked for that hotel. Mr. Evans went to the *Peninsula* and shouted at a man at the reception desk until the coolies carried my baggage to the N.Y.K. pier.

Of course, in all the excitement I had left one wooden case behind, but it was finally discovered and added to my mountain of baggage to be eventually loaded on to the Japanese steamer. Fortunately the N.Y.K. line had a travel office in the *Peninsula Hotel* and I was re-booked on the *Chichibu Maru* from Hong Kong via Shanghai and Kobe to Yokohama. My original reservations on that ship were from Shanghai to Japan, which meant that we only had to buy the addition of the Hong Kong/ Shanghai sector and the corresponding cancellation on the *Conte Rosso*. NYK sent a 'chitty', a written message, to Lloyd Triestino and they straightened things out between each other.

For lunch we took the hotel bus to the *Lido Hotel* and about four o'clock were back in the city. We went to an afternoon movie and then to a Chinese restaurant where we were to meet our hosts for a meal. They were surprisingly late until we discovered that they were waiting for us on a different floor. The

restaurant owned the whole building and there were different dishes served on each floor.

Mr. Wong was the local representative of the Sungs with whom my brother was negotiating. Mr Wong gave a dinner party in our honor in a top, referred to as "number one", restaurant in Canton. We were the guests of one of the leading local families. They were the Sung family, related to the banking family Kung and the military family Sun. Very powerful in industrial and banking circles, they were planning to establish the first artificial silk factory in China in the Canton province. Twenty years later I negotiated with David Kung, the son of our original contact. He was then a banker in Taiwan, Harvard educated and a perfect continuation of the family's long history as brilliant investors and entrepreneurs.

My dexterity and skill in using chopsticks was duly admired by Henry and Tom, as were my newly taught manners in eating Chinese food. I had promised myself not to be surprised at any food that was served. I had adolescently thought that a mien of superiority would clearly categorize me as an expert in Oriental food. So bring on the swallow's nest or sharks' fin soup. I knew it all, or so I thought.

All guests were seated at round tables for ten. The tables had a heavy center leg. There was a small door at the bottom of the hollow leg and the top ended in a little removable plate. A small live monkey was pushed through the bottom door and clambered inside the hollow leg to the opening on top. When its head appeared in the opening, the skull was quickly sliced off and the fresh brain offered as the specialty of the restaurant.

I had absolutely no reservations or qualms at this custom. Why should I have had? As far as I knew that was the way Chinese ate their meal every night. How did it taste? Not much different from lightly cooked brain commonly served in Czechoslovakia.

We were also served live shrimps. These came in a deep porcelain dish with a lid to keep in the little beasties. The drill was to carefully lift one side of the lid, slide the chopsticks into the dish and catch a shrimp, extract it carefully, dip it into rice wine to slow its reaction and after chewing, swallow the soured and well masticated crustacean.

Other dishes placed on the table included pigeon, chicken, pork, black jellied 'Thousand Year Eggs', several types of fish and Peking duck. The meal ended with lychee nuts floating in syrup. A hot rice wine was served in small porcelain bowls. There were a number of speeches, all expressing the appreciation of our hosts for my brother's visit to Canton (Guangzhou).

During the dinner there was an amusing incident with my brother. Henry had explained to me that our guests would select a choice piece of food from the communal bowls and with their chopsticks deposit it in my eating bowl with some polite remark that this was for the honored guest. It was then expected of me to pick up the morsel, say that it was much too good for me and return the



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food to the host. It would then be returned to me for a second time when I could eat it. I was just dying to try out this charade. Our hosts selected food and passed it to my brother, he passed it back; back it went again and was eaten by Henry. The same with Mr. Evans. The food came, the food went; it came back again, and was then eaten. Finally Henry made an effort for me. He selected an extra delicious looking piece of Peking duck, assured me that this was the best piece and just for me. Like a little lamb I murmured that it was too good for me, returned it to my brother - who promptly ate it. Never mind, there was plenty more duck.

The dinner went on a little longer than anticipated so we missed the steamer to Canton. As it was very late in the evening we checked into the YMCA for the night, in Kowloon, not on the island of Hong Kong. All the staff at the YMCA were Chinese, wore black trousers and white jackets and spoke English.

After breakfast on the 23rd we took the 1010 train, called 'Flying Arrow', from Kowloon to Canton. On arrival around noon we were driven to the *Victoria Hotel* on Shameen Island. The taxi driver was a turbaned Indian. I had now visited several foreign cities but had never come across the sort of driving that went on in Canton. The driver simply kept his finger on the horn, his intention to scare the rickshaws, pedestrians and cyclists away from the front of his car.

Shameen was an island in the Pearl River owned by France and England. There were only a few bridges connecting it to the mainland and each had small concrete bunkers with loopholes, barbed wire rolls and barriers. It was further protected by an Indian Sikh soldier with a shotgun who stood guard to prevent any Asians from entering this exclusively European island. After lunch, at the hotel, we went to the Navy Club that was frequented by the naval officers of the foreign warships that protected the foreign enclaves in China. As European visitors we were given guest cards to use the club. We played ping-pong and Henry played snooker with Mr. Evans.

In the afternoon, while Henry and Mr. Evans were busy with some business matters, I went back to the hotel and wrote letters. After their return we went back to the Navy Club, had dinner and then went to a movie. The taxi driver drove us to the furthest suburb. His excuse was that he had mistaken the Tsun Wah cinema with another. Mr. Evans, who spoke a little Chinese, simply paid only half of the fare shown on the meter and berated the dishonest driver for his attempt to cheat us.

When we returned to the hotel after the movie a new surprise awaited me. I slept for the first time under a mosquito net. I was told I would get used to that in Japan.

In the morning after breakfast we went to the temple of the *Five Hundred Buddhas* where I took several indoor pictures. On the way back to the hotel we stopped at a curio shop. I bought a sword that was supposed to be two hundred years old and a string of Chinese *cash*. The coins from the old Chinese currency had a square hole in the center. Then we had to return in a hurry to have a quick lunch and catch the train back to Kowloon. Mr. Evans

stayed on while Henry accompanied me. We spent quite some time at both the Italian and Japanese shipping agents to ensure that my missing case had been transported to the *Chichibu Maru*. Then we had time to go to a movie and to a Chinese restaurant. Henry took me to the steamer, saw me safely aboard, and then rushed off to catch the night steamer back to Canton.

25 November was my first day on the *Chichibu Maru*. I thought the ship and personnel terrific. It was hard to believe the politeness of the Japanese. Except for that, the journey was terribly boring. There was an American from the *Conte Rosso* and a man from Denmark who also sat at my table. The weather was very bad with heavy fog enveloping the ship and causing it to reduce speed.

27 November. Inside the ship it was very hot and on deck I froze. As a result I caught a cold. The fog caused us to miss the flood tide and we had to sit in the Yang Tse Kiang stream and wait from one o'clock until seven o'clock in the evening for the water to rise sufficiently. I was told that exercise was a good way to cure a cold so I used the indoor swimming pool, which had been filled in the morning.

When we arrived in Shanghai we tied up on the Bund. That was an international settlement, called a 'concession'. All taxis carried two licence plates, one for the Chinese sector of Shanghai and one for the European zone. The rickshaws were the same as the jinrickshaws in Singapore, Hong Kong and Canton and I considered myself now an 'Old China Hand'. After only a few hours we left on the outgoing tide and were quickly on our way to Japan and the reunion with my parents.

The Japanese luxury liner, the *Chichibu Maru*, was usually crowded between Yokohama, Hawaii, San Francisco and Los Angeles but relatively empty between the China Coast and Japan. I remember distinctly that there were only three passengers in First Class. I had cabin No.3. The Japanese dishes included *sashimi*, *sushi*, *matsutake* (mushroom) soup, *tempura* and the proverbial *suki yaki*. I had a wonderful time. The chopsticks were totally different from those for Chinese food. The Japanese ones were made of wood with the sticks still connected. They were more hygienic because one had to break them apart before use and they were disposed of after every meal.

The sea was again rough and I was the only passenger in the dining room. I systematically tried one dish after another and the headwaiter encouraged me to learn all about Japanese food. I finally had to give in when the waiters enjoyed playing along and continuously brought me different dishes to try. The waiters also brought a large bamboo bowl filled with grains of rice stuck to each other. I was told that after finishing the specialty dishes, I should take just a little more of the rice, finish it and pour a little of the green tea into the bowl. After swishing the tea around you drank and emptied the bowl to indicate that you had eaten enough and obviously enjoyed it down to the last kernel of rice.

We steamed in a slightly southerly direction, rounded southern Japan and headed north for Yokohama in Tokyo Bay. On this trip the stop in Kobe was cancelled and we went directly up the Eastern coast of Honshu Island. I had

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been told that the police in Japan were extremely strict with respect to guns and pistols. Nobody was permitted to own a weapon unless a permit had been obtained from the authorities. I worried several days and nights about what to do with my lovely pistol. Finally common sense prevailed and I did the only prudent thing. I went on deck one evening and flung the weapon and package of cartridges into the ocean.

My luggage was packed and ready at seven in the morning, although we were not to dock until noon. A Japanese custom official had been aboard since leaving Shanghai and, in the morning, sat at a table in the lounge. I presented my German passport with the Japanese visa that was stamped and then I was simply waved on. We were still miles away from the wharf but I was already standing near the gate where the gangway would be attached, trying to make out my parents among the people standing on the dock. It was a long time since I had seen them both and the last thirty minutes seemed like years.

## JAPAN

When I arrived in Tokyo my parents and Henry lived in a suite at the *Imperial Hotel*. They simply rented another room for me so the whole family occupied a string of rooms on the ground floor overlooking the hotel gardens. The *Imperial Hotel* was designed in the early twenties by the famous American architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, and had successfully withstood the 1923 Tokyo earthquake that leveled most of the town.

One of the first places I was taken to see was Nezu, an old part of Tokyo, which contrasted greatly from the contemporary part of the central city. This was my first impression of real Japanese life and, being so completely different to anything I had known in Europe, remained in my mind. It consisted mainly of narrow back streets snaking in every direction between wooden houses. Men and women were dressed in *kimonos* and *yukatas*. They wore *tabis*, the white or black socks that have two spaces keeping the big toe separate from the other four. These are specially created to wear with Japanese sandals (*getas*) and simple high wooden clogs which allow walking through mud and slush without getting one's *tabis* wet. Many people carried oiled paper umbrellas and most of the women had babies strapped to their backs, their tiny legs surrounding the mother's upper torso which, I have been told, contributed greatly to the Japanese bowed legs of past generations.

The houses, built to move and creak freely, were designed to give and sway in the earthquakes that regularly hit this part of Honshu. The outer doors were made of timber while the inner sliding *shoji* were of wood and paper. The floors were covered with woven *tatami* mats of a fixed size and the rooms and houses were referred to as being of a given number of *tatamis*.

My brother had been living in Japan before I arrived. Henry was permitted to work as an assistant to our project manager at Nippon Jinzo Sen-i, a rayon

plant we were building near Maebashi in the *daikon* center of Japan. *Daikon* is a very long Japanese radish (over a meter) and can, in some cases, become an addiction. Henry to this day loves *daikon* dunked in *shoyu* (soya bean) sauce spiced with *wasabi* (a very hot Japanese horseradish).

Shortly after my arrival, the family moved from the *Imperial Hotel* in Tokyo to Yokohama. The adjoining suite of rooms had been fine for a comparatively short stay but inconvenient for a long residence. My father had arranged an extended lease of the villa of the managing director of Shell Oil in Japan, including its staff. All houses were located within the walls of the *Rising Sun Compound* (Shell Oil), accessible only through heavy bamboo gates and a guard. The dining and reception rooms of our house were downstairs with the living quarters on the floor above.



Japan had many earthquakes and unless there was a major one I usually slept right through them. I learned that the word for a plurality of quakes, coming one after another, was a swarm. When awake, I would listen to the rumble, like a train when it rides over a switch. If it was a strong quake it was like something hitting the bottom of our villa. There were only 'foreigners' living in the Shell Compound and during a quake we usually waved to each other while gathering in the gardens. We were told to stand near a tree with a large root system to prevent being sucked down if the earth opened. A foetal position was recommended and, having never experienced any horrible disaster, I thought a good shake was a lot of fun. My mother, who was desperately afraid of earthquakes, regularly scolded me.

The compound was on a rise above Yokohama. We often drove down to the shopping area, Motomachi, which consisted of hundreds of stalls either side of the street. One passed through "The Bluff", a residential area mostly occupied by foreigners, with Japanese style wooden houses interspersed with more recent homes constructed of concrete and, by most, presumed to be earthquake-proof.

Several months later my parents rented the temporarily vacant residence of the Brazilian Ambassador, Antonio Assumpção. The residence was located in the diplomatic district of the capital and accessible to most of our guests. With the residence came a full staff, table and kitchenware, bed linens and gas fired heaters in most rooms. Normally, heating was done with *hibachis*, large earthenware pots filled with sand with a few pieces of glowing charcoal placed on top. The heat was barely enough to warm one's fingers and never designed to heat a whole room in a concrete house. It was ice cold during the freezing winter days and was the reason the residence was temporarily vacated. I always hated spending a night there during the winter. The amah tried to warm

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my freezing bedding by using a long-handled brass warming pan containing a few small pieces of hot charcoal. Fortunately, we only stayed at the house when important visitors were to be entertained in appropriately splendid surroundings.

No one in our family could speak Japanese. I was fluent in English and my parents were able to converse in English or French. I never knew whether mother taught the staff English or they taught us Japanese. Our *amah* spoke good English and had told the butler, who did not have English, "Guard your face, guests arriving". Mother adopted that saying as her own and Henry and I were constantly reminded to "guard our often long faces" when guests arrived in our home.

I remember various dinner parties given in honor of Baron Mitsui and his wife, the Imperial Princess Michiko, another one for the Czech shoe king, Jan Bata, (whose passport showed under "occupation" just one word: "cobbler"). Then there was the famous Japanese conductor, Viscount Konoe, brother of the then prime minister, and many occasions when the guests of honor were ambassadors from various countries. Life in those days appeared to me to consist mainly of much entertaining and keeping oneself amused during the days.

Summers were invariably spent at Karuizawa, a mountain resort near the Japan Alps National Park. The hotel where most foreigners stayed during the summer months was the *Mampeï*, completely built of wood and beautifully equipped with both European and Japanese rooms. The moment *nubai*, the rainy season, started there was an exodus of the foreign colony from Tokyo and Yokohama to the mountains and the cool weather in Karuizawa. There were varied diversions including riding, swimming, tennis, golfing, endless walking tracks and socializing. I remember particularly the nearby very lively volcano. Golfers often stopped their game to admire a minor eruption of Mt. Asama.

Much more memorable for me was a prank brother Henry enjoyed. The dining room of the hotel had a large slanting glass roof. When scoops of ice cream were served he would place one of the frozen balls on his napkin held loosely between his legs. Then he would snap the ends apart making the ice ball fly up to the ceiling where it would temporarily stick to the glass. The heat of the sun would melt the ice cream sufficiently to allow it to slide slowly towards the lower part of the roof. Eventually gravity would overcome adhesion and the blob would drop from the ceiling, sometimes falling successfully on the table of other guests.

Among my parents' many friends was the Chilean Ambassador, Martin Figueroa. He married one of mother's close friends, Lilian, a Viennese, former wife of the famous Austrian actor and theatre owner Hubert Marischka. Other friends included the Mexican Ambassador, General Aguilar, and his children, Antonio and Graciella. Henry and I dated with two sisters, Barbara and Rosemary (known as Rusty) Heseltine, who were often guests in our Yokohama home. Herr Emil Baerwald was a frequent visitor. He was head of the IG



Farben organization in Japan and had one of the finest collections of *netsukes*. They are beautifully carved ornaments worn as 'keepers' at the end of fans and small purses that tucked into the *obis* (sashes worn around the waist and holding the *kimonos* together).

There were only a small number of tennis enthusiasts our age. 'Bud' Degraw was the son of the managing director of Victor, the American gramophone giant. Al Nipkow was a young Swiss national who would later spend time with Henry in America. Antonio junior was the son of Antonio de Assumpção (the Brazilian Ambassador). The father was the Brazilian coffee king who thought to wean the Japanese from tea to coffee. The attempt was only successful after the war. Guy de Bassompierre, the Belgian Ambassador, was also a regular tennis partner of Henry's.

In 1937 I opened a small savings account with the *Yokohama Specie Bank* in Yokohama. When I left Japan in 1939 there were only a few yen left in the bankbook. After my return to Japan in 1953 I facetiously presented my old brownish-yellow cover savings book to the bank's successor. I was more than surprised when I was given a check for US\$2.18 and the old bank book, stamped 'Account Closed', as a souvenir. At a rate of 365 Yen to the US dollar I must have accumulated quite some interest over the years.

Since I was a new arrival in Japan, the school agreed to let me begin in the middle of the term. Acceptance took less than three weeks and I was enrolled in the *American School* at Nakameguro, one of Tokyo's mid-city districts. Every morning I walked from our home in Negishi to the bus stop, took the bus to Sakuragicho, the nearest Yokohama railway station, and the fast electric train to Nakameguro, with only one stop at Omori. From there it was only a five minute walk to the school. In the thirties Japan had three foreign schools. There was a Canadian Academy, a German school in Kobe and the American school in Tokyo. My father considered that the Kobe school was too nationalistic and unsuitable. The principal of the American school was Mr. Amos who ran a tight ship with excellent teachers. He was a photo buff and taught a class in photography. At the end of the year I won a competition with a picture of the 'Daibatsu of Kamakura', an immense cast bronze statue of Buddha and a favored shrine for visitors. My favorite class was typing, conducted by Miss Naomi Münzenmayer, who also taught German. The typing has stood me in good stead to this very day. I hated maths, squeaked by in Latin, was good in history and flew through all science subjects. Usually we finished classes by noon and, after lunch in the school's cafeteria, I returned to Yokohama. Sometimes, when I was still hungry, I followed the Japanese custom and bought 'o *bento*', on the train. These were small wooden containers filled with rice, a few shreds of yellow *daikon*, a few highly colored pickles and some dried fish. Also included were a short pair of *hashi*, (in this case, disposable wooden chop sticks) and a small folded paper napkin. Having dropped off my books at home I usually walked to the YCAC (Yokohama Country and Athletic Club) across the fields behind the wall surrounding the foreigner's 'Rising Sun

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Compound' where we lived in Negishi. Not far from the compound was the horse race track, and in the center area a nine-hole golf course.

YCAC was zealously restricted to the use of 'foreigners' only and no Japanese were ever admitted. There were one or two 'Eurasians', but they had foreign fathers and hence, non-Japanese names. One was Irene Lord who could have passed for a Japanese, but her father's position with the Ford Motor Company made her and her brother's membership possible. My brother Henry was one of the 'tennis greats' of the club. Our parents were social members and played bridge there from time to time, so I had no difficulty being admitted to junior membership. Every Saturday we had a movie evening. A large screen was put up in the hall; chairs were brought in where the middle-aged and older members sat. The young set routinely dragged beach chairs to the front where we reclined in almost horizontal position staring up at the screen only a few meters above us. The ratio between guy and girl members was about even and often the beach chairs were pushed closely together so that hands could be held and even a furtive kiss exchanged in the dark during a love scene on the screen. The films were always fairly new American or English movies, imported and waiting to have Japanese sub-titles added. The respective general managers of the large American and British movie studios were all members of the YCAC and vied to loan their films to the club for one movie night every week. The major studios of those days were British Gaumont, United Artists, Fox Studio, Warner Brothers, MGM, RKO, Columbia and Laemle Studios, (later Universal Pictures).

During the winter months, ice formed on the tennis courts that were carefully watered to create a perfectly even surface, for the members to enjoy skating. Henry not only was a good skater but center forward for the YCAC ice hockey team. Being less agile, but willing to take on the somewhat dangerous position of "goalie, I soon relished in the glamorous, heavily padded uniform and distinctive hockey stick of the goal keeper. When invited to play away from home, I loved the trip on the local train, of course wearing the padded uniform to the amusement of the locals who were used to the foreign devils' shenanigans.

The club had an annex, Morelli's Institute for Physical Culture. Signor Morelli, an Italian, ran the Institute and taught ju jitsu, wrestling, weight lifting and other manly arts. I was signed up as a member of the *istituto* and religiously went there every day after school to wrestle, lift weights and be thrown and slapped on the mat by other white, yellow or black belted practitioners of the finer art of ju jitsu. I loved lifting weights and the weekly gain, recorded on a blackboard, kept pace with the visible improvement of my youthful physique. One of my older friends at the club was Al Daff, an Australian and the representative of Universal Picture Studios in Hollywood. He was as keen as I and practiced wrestling regularly with others in his weight class. One day Signor Morelli announced that he would arrange an evening of show matches, with club members competing against visitors. The highlight would be a demonstration wrestling match between my friend Al Daff and Signor Morelli himself. The arrangements were clear. There was to be no winner, only demonstrations of

holds, throws and locks. Morelli had lumpy cauliflower ears and Al, concerned with unnecessary roughness, had insisted that no headlocks were to be used on him. During the action Morelli, several times, placed Al in a headlock, purposely rubbing his ears unmercifully with his powerful arms. Al's clearly audible request to 'stop this now', had little effect and after a break, Al lunged at Morelli, put him in a chest hold and the crack of Morelli's ribs could be heard about the room as he sank to the mat.

At that time the Italian government had shown strong friendship for Germany and Japan while the Australians, of course, sided with England. It had not necessarily been a grudge match, but the reaction of the mostly British and American audience was an uproarious applause for Al and little sympathy for Signor Morelli and his broken ribs.

On Sunday evenings the club featured dancing. We often brought our own favorite seventy-eight rpm records. The old wind-up gramophone we used played through a large horn and was difficult to hear it if we danced too far away. Older club members often came to have a meal in the verandah dining room and the younger set could hardly wait to rush into the big club hall and start the dances.

I shall always recall one skiing weekend. We had found a new superb snowfield in the mountains at a small place called Ichigonakasato. We were a large group of foreigners of different nationalities, some diplomats, some business people and some students like myself. We took the train from Tokyo. It was a four hour ride and we all got off at the small station in wonderful snow conditions. From there horse-pulled sleds took us to the ski hotel that was designed by an Austrian architect in the alpine style and built entirely of wood. It was three floors high and had an enormous central hall with a roaring fire at each end. The bunkrooms led off walk ways that surrounded the atrium on all four sides on each floor. Most of the rooms were designed for eight people, four on each side in two bunks, one upper and one lower. The window was at one end and the door at the other. Between the bunks and the door was a washbasin on each side and hanging space for the ski clothes. Above the doors were glass transoms that opened inward.

Having been assigned our bunks and stored away our skis in the 'waxing room', we had enough time to sit in the lounge and have drinks. (That is the older ones, I was not yet at the drinking age.) There were twenty-four of us, sixteen guys and eight girls and we were carefully distributed in two male and one female bunkroom. After about two hours of drinking we all went into the dining hall and had dinner. The meal was accompanied by several bottles of hot sake and slowly the mood and atmosphere took on a decidedly noisy and exuberant ambience.

A two meter plus blond Bavarian, who was an attaché of the German embassy, suddenly decided it was Bavarian skiing holiday. He suggested we all form a queue walking like the seven dwarves with one hand on the shoulder of the person ahead with a limp in one leg. In that manner we climbed the staircase to

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the first floor. There one of the hotel staff intercepted us and, placing his index finger over his mouth said: 'Ssssh'.

This of course brought forth shrieks of hilarity and we all added 'Ssssh' to our limp as we continued around the walkway. Having circled the atrium once, one of the 'older guys' discovered several aspidistras and, after pulling them out of the brass pots, dropped them down to the ground floor where the soil and plants exploded nicely. This rather upset the proprietor who, threatening us with all sorts of punishment, insisted we return immediately to our bunkrooms.

Threats were only oil on the fire and now we formed what later became known as a conga-line to the next floor and limped and, shooshed our way around the hallway. Suddenly the door of one of the bunk rooms opened and a very angry Japanese gentleman berated us for disturbing the peace, adding a few choice remarks about foreigners. Instead of quieting us down it incensed the leader and seizing a nearby red *Minimax* fire extinguisher, he pushed open the transom over the nearest door. While discharging the content of the extinguisher into the room he shouted in his best Japanese: *Hi, Hi*. (Fire. Fire).

The result was disastrous. The room, filling with foam from the extinguisher, contained a father, mother and their three children. Fearing for their lives in the wooden building, the father opened the window and threw his wife and children out into the snow, jumping after them, repeating the shout of: *Hi, Hi*.

The proprietor was not amused. By one o'clock in the morning all of us had been evicted from the hotel and, in the dark, made the very long trek down to the village station by foot to wait for the first morning train to Tokyo that arrived after seven. We had a long discussion on the train as to the wisdom of our conduct. It was the unanimous opinion of us all, that in spite of having been thrown out of the hotel and forced to walk to the station during the night, it had all been worthwhile.

My father's company office was in the Kikumasamune Building in Higashi-ku, at Ginza, Nishi, san-chome on the fourth floor. Our engineer Walouch, who had worked for our organization in Austria, and Dr. Hugh Fonkert from Holland, were in charge of technical matters. Okura and Company were our first machinery licensees in Japan and built the staple fiber unit for Nissshin Rayon Kabushiki Kaisha in Okazaki.



The city of Tokyo, in the thirties, was beginning to become 'westernized'. Antonio de Assumpção had established two coffee houses where coffee was served free of charge to all comers. The Mitsukoshi 'Depato' (department store) increased its foreign goods and at the large Maruzen bookstore one could find reading material in dozens of languages. There were still many typically Japanese customs and traditions. The night soil man, with two strongly smelling buckets on a stick carried across his shoulders, came every night to pick up and carry away contributions to the fertilization of the nearby fields from those families that did not then have toilet facilities of a more modern nature.

Breast feeding in public was considered normal. Such display being unknown in Europe, I greatly enjoyed watching babies being suckled on the train while riding to and from school. Observing a young and well developed motherly breast offered to a screaming child was nice to see, but the same method carried out by an older mother with rather flaccid and sagging mammaries soon lost its appeal for me.

Japanese loved to present gifts. They were invariably wrapped in beautiful paper with a ribbon holding the ends together and usually handed to the recipient with a deep bow. I soon learned the proper reaction when receiving a gift. There was none of today's automatic tearing of the wrapping. The gift was received with a bow that should be even lower than that of the giver. The package set aside to be opened in private. The reason for this conduct was to prevent the donor from knowing whether the recipient was thrilled or greatly disappointed with the contents. Other formal gifts were presented in a ceremonial cloth, known as *furoshiki*. The four ends of the cloth folded together over the *omiyage* and tied into a knot. One often saw Japanese carrying these vivid cloth wrappings that contributed greatly to the color of the street scenes. There were specific days when gifts were exchanged. Then the women, dressed in their finest *kimonos*, many carrying *furoshikis*, could be seen walking with the children to view *sakura hana* (cherry and plum blossoms) at the temples and in parks.

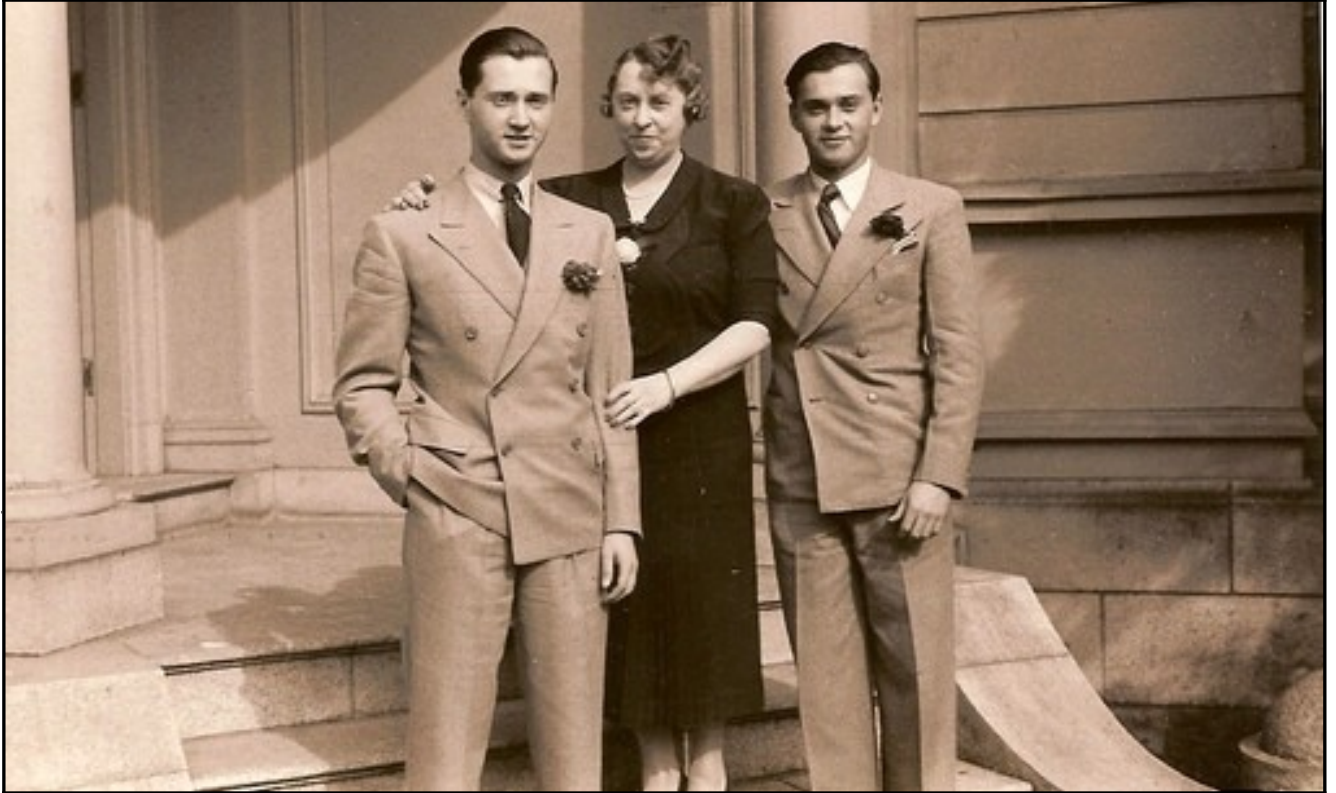
But I also remember the days after Japan had first invaded the Chinese continent. The war did not always bring victories. The country paid heavily for its military incursion and before too long the stream of dead had swollen to a torrent. Soldiers were cremated while overseas and their ashes, carefully identified, placed in small pine boxes for return to Japan. The families, notified of the arrival of the remains, would congregate at the railway stations where the boxes were handed to wives or mothers. Each box was then wrapped in a white cloth with two ends tied around the woman's neck and the casket suspended in front of the bearer. The widows and mothers then formed a long snake proceeding slowly to a temple where prayers were said for the country's heroes who had given their lives for the emperor.

For foreigners like us, any medical problem needed the attention of a doctor who could communicate in our language. He needed to have taken his medical training overseas to be able to listen to the problem and to discuss medications and remedies. We had a doctor with a great knowledge of internal medicine.



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He had trained in Germany and spoke fluent German. Doctors in Japan were not paid after a visit but sent an annual account which covered time they anticipated would be spent with a patient in the upcoming year. This bill was paid punctually since nothing was ever left outstanding over New Year. The payment was to keep the patient healthy; once the patient became sick, there was no charge.



stormy inland sea from Shimonoseki to Moji.

I was collected at the station by Frau Hammer and taken to the Japanese Inn where I was to live for the next six months. Having lived in a European style house in the Negishi suburb of Yokohama or in our Tokyo town house, I had little previous contact with the Japanese manner of living of the early thirties. My room, covered with *tatami* matting, had been fitted with a European style wardrobe, placed in one corner, in which to hang my suits and trousers. Japanese clothes did not require hanging as *kimonos* are usually folded and laid away. My bed consisted of a number of folded and rolled up *futons*. A lacquered wood lamp stood in one corner on the floor. As a special concession the management had installed a western toilet with a cistern above and a chain to flush.

In those days eastern toilets consisted of a deep pit covered by a stoneware plate set into an oval opening and two areas clearly indicating where one's feet should be placed. As part of our supply of machinery, furniture and other factory utilities, we also introduced a number of toilets imported from Europe. One of those was installed at the inn where our foreign staff was housed. Dr. Fonkert told me of an occasion when he opened a cubicle (locks were then unknown in country towns) and found one of the other guests sitting on the toilet. He was facing the wall, pulling the chain with one hand and with the other washing his

private parts in the flushing water. He praised the great hygiene of the foreigners in providing running water for ablutions.

Politeness prevented Dr. Fonkert from correcting his *faux pas*. Soon after, a graphic sketch illustrating the correct way of using western toilets, with instructions in Japanese, was fastened to the inside of the door.

The westernization of the inn did not, however, include the installation of a bathtub, the Japanese *o-furu* being considered superior and more hygienic.

I fully subscribe to the superiority of a Japanese bath but I had not been taught the proper procedures. My few belongings were stowed away with the giggling and very willing help of my *nesan* (literally 'little sister' but used for girl servant). I was told in country dialect and with hand signs to undress, put on a '*yukata*' and take a bath. I had no argument, as after the long train and ferry ride from Yokohama I certainly needed an *o-furu*, the hot bath.

The bathroom was very large, tiled and in one corner stood a big vat, made of birch wood, filled with steaming water. The *nesan* offered to help but I shooed her out of the room, closed the *shoji* (sliding door) and tested the water. It was boiling hot. From the outside there was no way to drain the hot water and replace it with cold. Since the floor was of stone tiles I turned on the only tap and added cold water. The excess hot water cascaded onto the floor and when it was a comfortable temperature I climbed into the tub. In accordance with Archimedes' principle an amount of water equal to my volume splashed over the tub onto the floor. I found to my delight that there were seats built into the side of the tub that made it possible to sit comfortably.

With the soap and a washcloth thoughtfully provided by the inn I rubbed and scrubbed and the foam slowly filled the big vat. From the inside of the tub I could feel the plug way down on the bottom. When I finished washing and soaking I removed the plug with my big toe, climbed out, dried myself and slipped on the *yukata*.

*Nesan* slid open the *shoji* and stuck in her head. I thought she would die of apoplexy. A shrill scream escaped her. '*Dame dai yo. Warui desu*'. 'This is not good. This is bad'. I had done the inexcusable and cooled down the bath water, washed myself in, rather than outside the tub and contaminated the beautiful cedar wood with soap suds. Cleanliness goes so far that you tie a towel around your forehead to absorb the perspiration and not contaminate the clean water of the communal bath.

Lesson number one. You go to the bathroom. You take off your *yukata*, a kimono-like house gown and squat down on a low wooden stool. Using a small bucket of boiling water scrub and cleanse yourself. *Nesan* will then scrub your back for you and after she has rinsed all the soap off, you proceed to immerse yourself slowly, very slowly, into the tub. There you steam and relax in the company of other people, male and female, old and young, and quietly talk over the events of the day.

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Lesson number two. You never pull out the plug to let the water escape. That is done during the night when the cedar wood is scrubbed and the tub is filled again with fresh boiling water.

Lesson number three. You never, never ever, dirty the tub with your soap, suds or foam. The tub is kept immaculately clean and only scrubbed bodies are expected to enter.

It took three to four hours to fill and heat that quantity of water and I had thrown the ablution system of the inn into turmoil until the afternoon. I learned my lesson and later thoroughly enjoyed bathing, particularly with females, only regretting that this civilized system was not in use in the western world.

I suddenly had the bright idea of having my own *kimono* made. The design is very simple and for a man's vestment it only needed about fifteen minutes of sewing to complete the attire. I was sent to a fabric shop having been told to simply ask for one *kimono* length. I saw hundreds of designs, in all colors, from the plainest to the most elaborate and costly cloth. The weather was hot and I decided on a white fabric with the design of black birds. The shopkeeper assured me that he would have the material made into a beautiful garment and showed me several lengths of cloth for the vital *obi*. While the *kimono* fabric was very inexpensive, the *obi* cloth was very costly. I wisely decided to ask for the assistance of Frau Hammer in the selection. We returned later that day and when I went to put on the garment created an orgy of hilarity. The fabric design I had selected was to be worn by a *meiko*, a young virgin, and had been sold to me in the belief that it was to be a present to a young girl. Ultimately I wound up with a fabric that was appropriate for a young man and a simple *obi*.

Being a young man, feeling his oats, I was impatient to sample the delights of this country town. The first evening brought with it an invitation by the Hammers to eat with them. It was hard to wait until I could reasonably make my excuses and say good night to my hosts.



I had made inquiries and had been told to which *akachochin* I should go. These were little bars where locals gathered together to drink plum wine, sake or beer. They were easily recognizable by a small red paper lantern that shone brightly in the evenings on the mostly unlit narrow streets. I had never before been in one of those places and was eager to enter. At the numerous functions I had attended in Tokyo and Yokohama, I had often drunk sake and knew well enough not to overindulge. There were no age limits for foreigners in bars and it was difficult for a Japanese to tell whether I was seventeen or twenty-one. My Japanese was fluent enough to make myself well understood, although there was much hilarity at some of my expressions, which clearly branded me as an *edo jin* (a Tokyo-ite or a city slicker). On the other hand I had a rough time understanding the broad country slang of the Kumamoto district. This bar could hold at best about twenty people and there were a few foreigners, whom I soon met.

After ordering a small bottle of hot sake from *mama-san*, I was served with various types of nibbles consisting of *daikon*, tiny morsels of grilled squid and bits of dried fish with a few drops of *shoyu* (heavy dark soya sauce).

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One young man from England explained that this was one of his last days in Yatsushiro since he was being transferred back to the UK and, after clearing up loose ends, was ready to leave. His companion for the evening was a very pretty young girl and we were introduced.

I learned that she had been his girlfriend for several months and he had provided her with a small rented house where they lived. He must have seen in me a solution to his problem of how to divest himself, in a nice way, of his young lady. He invited me to his house and I was told that he had pre-paid the rent for half a year. He provided her with money for food, she did most of the cooking and also washed his laundry.

All this sounded only too good to me and I was more than willing to take my new acquaintance's place after his departure. We met again the following evening and two days later he left and I moved in with the young lady.

This idyllic and most satisfactory arrangement came to a very abrupt end. Frau Hammer, good to her promise to look after the boss's son, immediately wrote a long letter to my father apprising him of the sordid facts. 'Herr Ralph' had taken up with a young barmaid, had moved out of the inn and was living with her. Shortly after, a telegram arrived asking the Hammers to put me on the next convenient train to Yokohama. The next day I was on my way home.



On arrival at the Yokohama station I did not see my mother but found only our driver who took me directly to *oisha-san*, our family doctor. I was most thoroughly examined and after leaving various bodily samples, taken to our house at Negishi. Neither my mother nor my father ever mentioned one word about this affair until many years later. I always admired them for their action and decided that should something similar happen to my son, I would try and follow their elegant example.

After my return from Yatsushiro my father gave me another chance and I was dispatched to two more of our clients' factories to be further immersed in the secrets of the synthetic fiber industry. I was sent to Nippon Keori Kabushiki Kaisha at Nagoya, where I worked for a few months and then to Nippon Rayon at Uji on the Biwa Lake and often visited nearby Nara. In the thirties Nara was mostly famous for its magnificent temple and wonderful deer park. There hundreds of tame deer walked majestically under the trees and daintily accepted food offered to them by visitors. Later I also worked at Kanega Fuji Boseki's



experimental plant at Kobe and remember staying at the famous old *Oriental Hotel*, one of the first built with foreign visitors in mind.



## MIGRATION

The political situation in Japan worsened day by day. There must have been many quiet discussions between my parents about the future. My brother Henry was in New York and had negotiated with a number of American rayon producers about supplying them with our latest machinery and chemical processes. One day I was told that I was to accompany my mother to California. There I was to enter the University of Southern California in Los Angeles and she and I would wait for my father. He would remain behind in Yokohama until the last major negotiations had been concluded.

Mutti and I had adjoining cabins No. 130 & 132 that successfully killed the realization of my dreams of the wild times I would have while aboard. I remember our saying good-bye to Vati. He had always been a heavy smoker and was puffing away in my mother's cabin when she asked him to put out his cigar. "The smell of cigar smoke will be in here the entire trip," she complained.

He did better than that. He threw his cigar out of the porthole and promised not to smoke until they were re-united. From that rash promise he developed into a non-smoker and never again lit another cigar or cigarette.

On May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1938 we sailed from Yokohama on the *S. S. President Coolidge* of the Dollar Steamship Lines. After some rather cold bleak days the temperature picked up and we steamed in beautiful warm Pacific Ocean weather toward Hawaii and arrived in Honolulu on the eighteenth. Passport inspectors had been put aboard when the pilot joined the ship and sat at a number of tables in the first class lounge. Passengers from second class were also permitted in the lounge and we all presented our passports for stamping. Our German passports, newly issued by the Consulate General in Yokohama, had the swastika on the cover and inside the United States immigration visa allowing us to enter the States as permanent residents. The Royal Hawaiian band played at the pier when we docked under the Aloha Tower. Every first class passenger was garlanded with lei as they disembarked. As had been suggested to us, my mother and I took a taxi to the beautiful pink *Royal Hawaiian Hotel*. After lunch on the terrace overlooking the beach we crossed the street for the almost obligatory visit to the Gump Department Store. That was a revelation after

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being used to the small shops in Japan. We then went to the Hawaiian Village to inspect the merchandise displayed for the tourists.

We were back aboard ship in the evening and The *President Coolidge* headed to the east and arrived at San Pedro, Port of Los Angeles on May 27<sup>th</sup> after stopping briefly in San Francisco.

Our passports, having already been inspected and stamped in Honolulu, were looked at only superficially on the mainland. We went ashore to see that our luggage was unloaded and properly stored for subsequent transport to what would be our temporary home until my father could join us. The timing of his arrival from Japan was unknown.

Arrangements had been made for us to move into a large apartment in Franklin Apartments at 5640 Franklin Avenue in Hollywood. There was a spacious underground garage permitting us to store and have access to our many trunks, cases and bundles. We were soon settled and I enrolled at the *University of Southern California (USC)*.

I had credits from the *American School* in Japan that would enable me to quickly complete a Bachelor of Science. Entry to *USC* was simple in those days. The fact that I was applying as a student from Japan made matters easy and I selected a straight chemistry course. A fairly poor student at best, I hated studies and dreaded having to spend years learning. Fortunately my courses allowed me to attend classes only when I wanted as long as I passed the periodic written exams. I was perfectly happy and even enjoyed sitting and standing through the lab classes (my previous work in the laboratories in the Japanese factories helped greatly).

As part of the necessary credits I had also selected a course in microscopy. That was something I had used in my work in Japan when checking artificial fibers. To obtain a cross section of a fiber, it was imbedded in wax and placed with micrometer adjustments on a microtome. When fixed, the heavy scalpel, activated by a hand driven wheel, sliced a minute sliver off the specimen for inspection under the microscope's oculars. The slicing was almost instant and not as slow and cumbersome as the equipment I had used in Japan. I cranked, left my finger in the way and the scalpel moved in a flash. I shall always carry the scar on my left index finger.

A number of movie people also had apartments in our building and my mother had little trouble in quickly making friends. Being an avid bridge player she soon collected a coterie of equally enthusiastic players around herself and spent many afternoons with the same foursome playing for penny stakes. I remember in particular Bill Pratt, from London, whose stage name was Boris Karloff. He was famous for his portrayal of the original *Frankenstein*. He needed to be bribed over the telephone every week with the promise of a slice of my mother's wonderful afternoon-tea cakes and a cup of Viennese coffee with whipped cream. Karl Brecher, another well known actor, and Countess de Zaruba, a vivacious Hungarian voice coach, turned up quite regularly. The

parents of Franceska Gum (later Judy Garland) also lived in our building and I met Judy many times before she became a famous child star.

Another of mother's old friends was the composer Erich Wolfgang Korngold. who after fleeing the Nazis had landed in Hollywood and did very well writing movie music. .Mutti was in her element having so many of her former musical friends from Vienna around her, I had made new friends among the local kids and was perfectly happy to be left to my own devices.

Soon after our arrival my brother Henry came from New York in an enormous black, dual-eight Packard convertible, covered with much chrome and spare tires on the running boards. Since he was returning to the east coast by train he gave me the fabulous car as a gift. He and a friend from Japanese days, Alfred Nipkow, had both bought a car in New York and driven to Hollywood in convoy. Driving through Little Rock they were picked up by a motorcycle cop for speeding and since it was a Saturday held and arraigned for hearing the following Monday, when they were released after paying a heavy fine.

As the owner of the car I had only one problem. I had no licence and since chauffeurs did the driving in Japan, little driving experience. It was not many days before I lined up at the California Motor Vehicle Bureau in Hollywood and took the oral and driving test that, to my surprise, I passed. Ownership was transferred to me and I drove my new car, still equipped with New York license plates. I quickly became the envy of several of my peers. In the evenings we often used my car for drives to Malibu Beach where we had communal weenie roasts. I visited the usual tourist places such as the *Coconut Grove*, later destroyed by fire, went to movie premiers at *Grauman's Chinese Theatre* and had a meal at the *Brown Derby*. I stood at the corner of Vine Street and Hollywood Boulevard and looked for movie stars. The roadways were awe inspiring with tramway tracks down the middle of the many lanes of traffic. I drove past the La Brea tar pits and watched the oil wells pumping. Other great evening entertainment was going to outdoor drive-in theatres. For me those were new and different recreations unknown in Japan or Europe.



Before the days of Coca Cola, we used to go to the drug store at the corner of Western and Franklin Avenues. We perched on the stools and drank Cherry Phosphate for a nickel (five cents) at the soda fountain. To express our love to our "dates", we would each pull out a tissue wrapped straw from the holder. Both straws went into the same glass and we would suck our drink together while furtively holding hands under the counter.

Richard Tauber, my parent's close friend, came over from London to negotiate a possible movie contract. The studio put him up in one of the bungalows at the *Beverly Hills Hotel* and we spent a lot of time with him. One afternoon the bell sounded and in walked Marlene Dietrich. She presented Richard with a gorgeous chocolate cake that, she said, she had baked that morning especially for him. I can attest to the fact that it was a delicious, moist cake that all of us enjoyed thoroughly. Another of Richard's favorite dishes was Hungarian *gulasch*. Mutti volunteered, and through our apartment soon wafted the odors of frying onions, lightly browned veal chunks and the sweet aroma of fresh Hungarian paprika. The *gulasch* slowly heated in the juices and then simmered in a very heavy casserole. We carried it to Richard's apartment where he helped to stir in the cream until the dish took on the proper consistency. Poor Richard had lived the past few years in London far removed from his favorite food and little contact with his pre-war friends.

One day my mother and I were invited by one of Henry's former friends, Dick Ross, from Japan. He was then a senior official of the RKO Studios and we were glad to see him again. He had sustained an injury on his leg and required medical assistance. He and his family were Christian Scientists and he refused to accept any treatment. His leg became badly infected and although his parents in the USA were contacted by radiogram, they insisted that prayer alone be used to cure his ills. Unfortunately prayer did not suffice and ultimately, without permission, the hospital amputated the leg, which at least

saved his life. When we met Ross again, it was at RKO in Hollywood and he had learned to walk well with a prostheses from his knee down.

This was our first visit to a movie studio and at other times I had the opportunity to visit the MGM lot to watch movies being made.

I signed up for Spanish evening classes at the *Hollywood High School*. My object was to be able to speak Spanish and my attempts were often unusual.

"A donde es el professor?" "El professor es debajo del radiador."

"Where is the professor?" my reply was, "The professor is under the radiator". In later years I found that the little Spanish I had learned, together with the Latin classes at the *Internat* in Switzerland, were of considerable help in my future dealings in South America.

My mother suggested that I could use my spare time to better advantage than chasing girls. She dreamt that I would make a great pilot and only days later we drove to the *Zweng Flying School* at the Glendale airport, not too far from Hollywood. I was quickly signed up for lessons and assured that I could progress at my own speed, depending on how much time I wanted to spend on my studies. I was offered a special deal if I would drive the fuel truck and help with refueling the school's fleet of planes. It took little time to study the California road code for trucks and buses and after passing the oral exam and driving a borrowed vehicle around the block, I was issued with a 'Heavy Motor Vehicle' driving licence.

Once properly legal I learned to pick up the gas truck from its parking spot, drive it to the returning planes and fill their tanks with aviation kerosene. Then whenever one of the instructors was free I climbed into a plane and took off for another circuit flight or landing. I did my first solo after eight hours and was then told to concentrate more on the non-flying courses that required a lot of study. These included aviation law, meteorology, commerce regulations, and my favorite flying subjects of aerobatics, point-to-point flights, cross country hops and landings, over and over again. After having logged twelve hours in the air I fronted up to the aviation inspector. He inspected my log book to confirm my marks in the non-flying subjects and flew with me while I demonstrated my ability to recover from a stall and slow spin. Finally he watched from the ground while I showed off my skill to set down the plane in a gentle three-point landing.

Most of the time I flew a Taylor aircraft with a 65 HP Continental engine. Prior to flying it was usual to get out the polish and wax the fabric of the plane's body and hose off the wheels and tailskid to get rid of the grass clippings and soil picked up from the grass runway. In 1938 the instruments consisted of an altimeter, airspeed and flight level indicator and a compass. The controls consisted of a switch, a stick for the aileron and flaps and two pedals for the rudder. In one of the planes the seats were behind each other and in others, side by side. Later, when I had my licence, I sometimes flew an old high-powered Waco with a radial engine and an open cockpit. Rather like the cartoon character *Snoopy* I had to wear a leather aviation helmet and a long



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white silk scarf. To start the engine someone stood in front of the plane and waited until the pilot checked and called out "switch is off", then "contact". The man up front would then swing the propeller and with some luck and the compression being right, the engine would start. The photograph shows me in a Howard Wasp that had a 450 hp engine.

I shall always remember a freak accident, fortunately with no injury resulting. California had a special corps of law officers who had control of the air. One of those was Wallace Berry, a famous movie star of the thirties, and father of Noah, who became well known in the forties. Wallace Berry was appointed a sky sheriff and piloted his own plane, based at Glendale, and expected to report on any flight violations, such as low flying, stunt flying, etcetera. One day he pulled onto the runway, set his brakes and was revving his engine in a test. A student pilot came in for a landing and did the impossible. He sat his plane down exactly on top of Wallace Berry's double decker's wing. His wheels ripped the fabric and the two planes were locked together into one amusing triple-decker. A red-in-the-face Berry, famous for his voluble outbursts in many western films, is said to have scorched the fabric of his plane when berating the unlucky student.



I also remember the twin children of a famous radio preacher, Betty McPherson, who had established her own church in Los Angeles. Her young son and daughter, both designated priests in her new religion, came to the airstrip. They arrived in identical Cadillac convertibles, one pink and one baby blue, and

climbed into their individual planes, one pink and one baby blue, and took off for their daily flying.

## THE WAR YEARS

Once I had finished my university degree Mutti and I moved to New York to join Vati and Henry. My beautiful Packard car was sold as it was too difficult to arrange for it to be driven back to New York. My mother and I took the Santa Fe *Super Chief* train to Chicago en route to New York. I had never before seen railway porters place small portable stools below the steps to help passengers entrain. We had adjoining Pullman compartments near the middle of the car, supposedly the least noisy and shaky place. The compartment on the other side of my mother's was occupied by Joan Crawford of Hollywood fame and the two ladies talked for hours about Japan. In Chicago we had to change from the Santa Fe to the New York Central station and from there took the *Twentieth Century Express* night sleeper to Grand Central station in New York, where we joined Vati and Henry at the *Hotel Roosevelt* on Seventh Avenue.

We soon moved from the *Roosevelt* to a large suite in the *Stanhope Hotel* at the corner of Fifth Avenue and 81st Street and shortly after to a grand apartment on the seventh floor at 912 Fifth Avenue, overlooking Central Park. Our Office was at 501 Fifth Avenue, corner of 42nd Street. We had at first subleased three adjoining rooms in '501' from Henry Goldman, founder of the banking house, Goldman Sachs, and an old friend of Vati's. At the time of Goldman's death we purchased the magnificent furniture and fittings of the bank's founder's private offices. The '501' building was owned by Oceanic Development Co. Ltd. That in turn was owned by the British Crown. I always remembered my mother jokingly referring to King George VI as our landlord.

Later on we added further rooms to our 19th floor offices and as the organization grew took over the 18th and 20th floors. The building had a side entrance on 42nd Street that we also used as an alternative to our Fifth Avenue address.

One of the important clients of the Von Kohorn organization was the famous department store Wanamakers on Fifth and 34th Street. For many years they had imported carpets manufactured in Germany from my dad's mills in Chemnitz. I remember Vati taking me with him to the store's carpet and rug department and asking the departmental manager to show me some of the carpets from our mills. It was a proud moment for me to see a Kohorn product on display in the store.

With the growing restriction of imports from Europe, several items of daily use became difficult to obtain. Among these were cork stoppers used for all types of bottles. The difficulty of obtaining rubber from the rubber producing countries made the need for cork essential. During the war years my father was approached by a scientist acquaintance, Dr. Joseph Ehrlich from Vienna, with

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the idea of using re-cycled cork. My father formed a new company, Radex Inc. and housed it in the penthouse of '501' to carry out laboratory experiments. Later, when the new product was proven he established a small plant. There the old corks were collected, ground into fine slivers, mixed with chemical resins and pressed out into long cork sausages. They were cut into lengths and packaged for shipping. It was considered an important product and thus RADEX did its thing for the war effort.

After war had been declared the United States became very conscious of the possibility of espionage and sabotage. One interesting interlude occurred when two FBI agents appeared in my father's office and asked to speak to me. I was quizzed and interrogated about my feelings for Japan and Germany and whether I had published any pro-German literature. Concerned, worried and thoroughly shaken at my contact with the, in those days, feared FBI, I tried to find out how my name had appeared on any list of possibly dangerous aliens. I was told that the Bureau was in the possession of a speech I had supposedly given in Japan supporting the return to Germany of her pre-First World War colonies. A light clicked. About a year ago the senior class of the *American School* in Japan held its annual debate. The subject was: "Should the German pre-war colonies be returned to her." The pros and cons were selected by lot and I pulled the final position on the pro side. I had my debating points written out on small cards and kept these, as one keeps mementos from one's school days. The family's household goods had been shipped from Yokohama to the States and when customs checked the luggage, they had come across the stack of cards captioned RETURN OF GERMAN COLONIES and had eventually decided to investigate the author. Once they had satisfied themselves of my innocence they returned the cards to me and the subject was closed.

Life in New York was bliss. I made many friends and took advantage of the diverse attractions that were available. Across from our home on Fifth Avenue, on the other side of Central Park was a riding stable. Once I had registered as a client, it only needed a phone call and a horse was saddled and waiting for a ride in the park. It only took ten minutes to drive through to Central Park West and usually I had a date with some young lady who would accompany me for an early morning canter along the park's riding paths. We always arrived long before breakfast and part of the exercise was a drive to *Reubens* on 58th Street where I sat down to a delicious meal with fresh orange juice, bacon and eggs, lots of toast and several cups of coffee. Usually I was home by half past seven, had my shower and was ready to go to our office before 9 a.m.

Sometimes I accompanied Vati on fishing expeditions. Late at night we would go to Coney Island from where, in those days, charter vessels would leave after midnight to reach the Atlantic offshore fishing grounds at sunrise. The boats had the accurate if coarse appellation of *pukers*. We usually returned home in the evening with a considerable number of fish caught either on hand line or fishing rod, but always had a great time. A day spent on the ocean seemed to suit Vati particularly well.

My brother Henry's interests were solely in tennis and he spent every free day on the courts, private or public, wherever he could have a game or could make arrangements for a pro to play with him hour after hour.

I loved being out on the ocean and if it could not be fishing, the next best thing was sailing on Long Island Sound. One of Henry's tennis playing friends was a stockbroker, with Bache and Company, and needed a crew for his yacht. On Saturday afternoons regular races were held for different classes of boats. His boat was an *International One Ten*. It was a Hunt designed monohull racing dinghy that came onto the market in the United States in 1939. Constructed of wood it was 7.3 meters long with a beam of only 1.3 meters and a draft of less than one meter. With a fin keel it weighed just under 150 kilograms and was an extremely steady craft that carried fifteen and a half square meters of sail and a spinnaker of eighteen and a half square meters. Sloop rigged with a trapeze it was designed as a two-man boat and particularly suited to the fluky winds of Long Island Sound.

The skipper insisted on maintaining a low aerodynamic profile when we were racing. When there was no work to be done with the sails and lines, I spent most of the time kneeling very uncomfortably on the wooden duckboards facing forward, keeping my head down and trying to pretend that I was streamlined and offering no resistance to the wind. The capricious nature of the breeze meant I adopted that position for long periods.

Our homeport was Mamaroneck Harbor. Since, for weight reasons, we did not carry an outboard while racing, it was sail alone from leaving the mooring until we picked up our small float upon return. We carried a pocket size *Tango* flag that we hoisted, indicating that we wanted transport back to the club jetty. As well as life vests and a bucket, we sported a meter-long foghorn to be used when suddenly enveloped in one of the Sound's famous pea-soupers.

The foghorn often came in handy after return. In addition to the *Tango* flag, the mooing sounds from the moored boats drifted over the water to the jetty to attract the attention of the boat-boy. He would then come out with the tender and ferry us back ashore for de-briefing and sail packing. Debriefing was a clever invention of the racing and bar committee. It allowed sailors to join together for a few drinks while discussing the problems, complaints and protests resulting from the recently completed race. Sail packing was an unpleasant but unavoidable chore. It included spreading the tanned sails on the club lawn, removing the salt by hosing them down with fresh water, folding, rolling, and packing them into the sail bags ready for immediate hoisting the following Saturday.

On the way out to the races we would work the boat slowly past the 'nun' buoys to starboard, Steamboat and Ship Rocks and leave the red ocean buoy '42' to port, head for the committee boat and the starting line.

Unfortunately sailing weekends occasionally had to be interrupted by work. Having worked in Japan in several rayon plants I was particularly experienced in a specialty fiber with a coarse cross section. The E. I. du Pont de Nemours

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Company was engaged in a patent fight with a carpet producer who claimed lesser dirt retention if using a new type of fiber. I was engaged by duPont to check at the U. S. Department of Commerce in Washington for already existing patents. I spent the next month reading and searching many hundreds of patents and found the necessary data that allowed duPont to successfully fight the unwanted application. Unfortunately it was an unpaid job, but the patent search came in handy when much later I used the knowledge in developing my own patents in producing artificial sponges. There were many other patents that both Henry and I applied for as part of the ongoing business. One of them was for rapid ageing of Alkali Cellulose issued in India in 1948. Another was for crimping of fibres issued in New York in 1946.

Not long after our arrival in New York, the World's Fair opened. I went several times to the fair grounds near La Guardia airport and was particularly interested in visiting the foreign pavilions and restaurants of different nationalities. A huge globe, the symbol of the Fair, was visible from a very large distance. After trying unsuccessfully to find a space to park my car within a halfway easy walking distance, the next visits were made quickly and comfortably by subway. One of the features of the Fair was a lake with a floating platform on which a stage had been erected. The audience was seated ashore in an amphitheater-like setting. Some of America's 'big bands' performed there in the afternoons and evenings and were for me one of the main attractions of the Fair. Another magnetism of the World's Fair was the completely new amusement park. It featured higher and faster rides, bigger and louder displays, and larger and more colorful performances. The crowds over the short period of the Fair were phenomenal. They had not only come from all over the United States, but from all parts of Europe, Asia and other parts of the world. Financially the New York World Fair was completely successful.

My parents originally went for their summer holidays to Tuxedo Park and later to Saratoga. I drove up a few times to spend a weekend at these two 'fashionable' places, but they were certainly not intended to keep younger people amused. Usually I could not wait to get back into the car on Sunday afternoon to drive back to New York.

In winter, once it started to snow in New York, I was anxious to ski and, being new to the area, I telephoned a travel agency for recommendations at nearby resorts. I was advised to go to Lake Placid, made famous by the 1932 Winter Olympics. I traveled by train and found the hotel of top standard and everything as fine as I had been told. It had a private skating rink and quite a young crowd. Early in the evening I donned rented skates and staggered from the surrounding benches to the ice. I had barely skated a few minutes when a beautiful young lady came to the rink; she too staggered to the ice. I rushed to her side and offered a hand. She explained that she first had to remove the protective covers from her blades. She then stepped on the ice, disappeared in a flash, turned and skated back to me, screeching to a stop and sending a dusting of ice into my face. I was agape. She introduced herself; Donna Atwood. She told me she was the recent winner in the U. S. Figure Skating competition. I felt like



an idiot, but had enough sense left to invite her to have drinks with me at the bar later that evening. We became quite friendly; she was my age and I learned further that she was hoping to one day produce a skating show. Months later she did appear in the show called *Ice Capades* and when I saw her in that production remembered with embarrassment that I had been trying to “help” her at Lake Placid.

The following morning I signed up as a member of the *Snow Birds of Lake Placid Club*, which entitled me to a pass to the chair lift. It also entitled me to use the Olympic ski jump, which I had never seen. Having previously jumped over small hillocks in Japan, I felt well qualified to have a go.

The announcement over a speaker at the hotel called for all ski jumpers to get on the bus for the tower. My pass let me on the bus. We drove for about fifteen minutes to a structure, which appeared from the distance to look like the Eiffel Tower. At this point of time I should have quietly jumped out of the bus and departed. Stupidity prevailed and I continued to the base of the structure. My co-jumpers piled into the hut to select their skis. Here again I should have ceased and desisted. Idiotic pride prevailed and I was fitted with boots and special skis that should have told me the story. Not plain skis but enormous, heavy ones of almost double width. They also had cable bindings that clamped the boot to the toe piece. There was much banter and back slapping while groups of six squeezed into a lift. Clutching our skis we were hoisted up and up until finally alighting on a small platform. My co-idiot could hardly wait to get their skis on and line up at the tower’s edge.

I moved to the starting position, still without my skis on and had a good look at the jump. The feeling is hard to describe. Before my eyes there was a far away valley, connected by a narrow ribbon of snow leading up to the starting platform. There were two distinctly visible tracks leading down the snow ribbon. The first of my buddies lined up at the platform’s edge and with the starter giving him a push in the back, disappeared down the abyss, laying the first spoor in the snow. Moments later I saw a small figure beneath me flying through the air and finally landing on the bottom of the hill.

This first, obviously a suicide candidate, was followed by the next. There were more arriving with the lift and slowly a steady stream of jumpers alighted. They arrived; they jumped, arrived and jumped. After I had failed to see any dead bodies, I clipped on my skis and at the very end, when all had completed their three jumps, moved to the edge and slid down the incline. While the others had thrown their bodies forward in an effort to increase the jumping distance, I simply let the tracks guide me. I was lifted limply a few meters in the air and surely by luck alone managed to land on my two skis. I continued hurtling down the track and at the bottom performed a brilliant piece of slowing and stopping. I could not get my skis off fast enough and, after returning them, stood patiently waiting for the bus ride home. While all the others had taken advantage of the normal three jump procedure, I thanked my lucky stars I was still alive after one jump and waved off offers of trying just once more. After a few days of rather more modest fun on the slopes I took the train back to New York.

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In the early forties I volunteered and joined the New York National Guard and became a guidon bearer of 'K' company, Seventeenth Regiment, serving under Major Harold Bache. In his non-military life Harold was the head of Bache & Company, then one of the leading Wall Street brokerage houses. This pre-military service training later stood me in good stead.

A later contact with American intelligence agencies was more interesting. Having traveled widely in Japan, visiting many industrial installations where our company had installed machinery and equipment, my knowledge of several war-essential factories was of some value. One day I was requested to visit a certain room in the large building, 500 Fifth Avenue. OSS was discreetly painted on the glass door. A young lady received me and, once she had established I was there by invitation, I was passed on to a sergeant who spent the next five days with me, going over large numbers of photographs of industrial installations. The factories I knew and could identify were then thoroughly discussed and, in particular, the north and south axis drawn on every photograph. OSS, Office of Strategic Services, was one of the many government departments involved in aircraft target spotting and I was one of thousands of people interrogated by them to identify possible objectives. My contribution was only small but it must have been of some help since the factories I identified were destroyed during bombing raids.

Vati and two friends had purchased an existing rayon plant in Cleveland, Ohio. Acme Rayon Corporation's factory was located at 1294 West Seventieth Street, between Detroit Avenue and Lake Erie. It was an old brick building but had sufficient adjoining land to allow expansion. After our take-over, a new company was formed and National Rayon Corp. was born. Having worked in two of the rayon companies we had built and supplied in Japan, I was sent to Cleveland and appointed one of four foremen who supervised production around the clock. The plant's top management consisted of plant manager Dr. Alfred Politzer, married to Anna Marie, and chief engineer Emil Glauber. Before World War Two Dr. Politzer had been chief chemist at the Bata rayon plant at Baticovce in Slovakia and Emil Glauber chief engineer of the Von Kohorn operations in Austria.

I lived in Cleveland originally in a rented house in Rocky River with my brother Henry and Gerry Frankel, the son of one of our dad's partners. After both left, I moved to the Hotel Raddison in mid city. The factory fulfilled an important role in producing artificial yarn, a product very much in short supply during the war. I stayed on at the factory and experimented in developing artificial sponges. I had several ideas in connection with the manufacture of the sponges that resulted in a patent application being filed and eventually in the issue of my first patent.

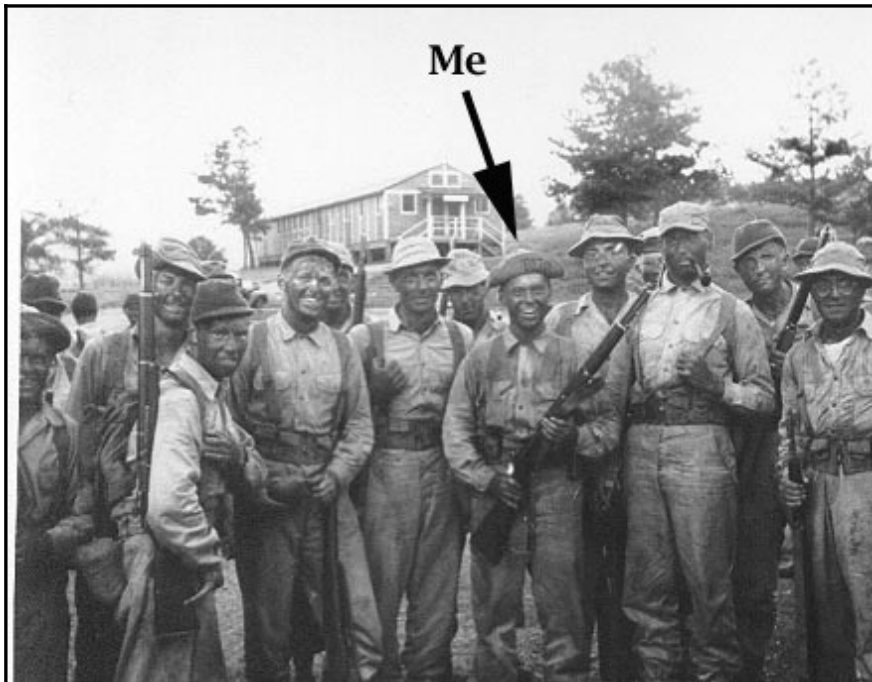
On 6 December 1941 I drove up to Bennington, Vermont to attend a ball at Smith College. My date was Joan Lewis and I had checked in at the hotel to dress before calling at her sorority house. At midnight the band stopped playing and on our way back to her house I managed to get my car stuck so successfully that it needed a tow-truck to get me mobile. As I was driving back

to New York, the news of the attack on Pearl Harbor came over the radio. Later that day President Roosevelt made his famous speech declaring war on Japan and mentioning that December Seventh would go down in history as a Day of Infamy.

While playing tennis, Henry met a young lady that he found most interesting and attractive. After several months they decided to get married. Joyce's father, Louis Kahn, was chairman of Kahn and Feldman, one of the foremost textile mills in the USA. The Kahn's lived on a sprawling estate on North Street in New Rochelle, NY with a tennis court and large gardens behind their house. The wedding date was set for the twenty second of December 1942. Joyce's brother Jack was a captain in the army and arranged a furlough to be present. At that time I was working at our plant in Cleveland and made arrangements to fly to New York to stay with my parents and attend my brother's wedding.

With the war on, holding the wedding at the Kahn residence, thirty minutes drive from Manhattan, seemed most appropriate. It was a spectacular ceremony, large crowds and wonderful food. Henry and I were in adjoining guestrooms separated by a bathroom. While I was getting dressed for the ceremony Henry was stretched out in the bathtub shaving, foam and stubble floating in the water. Funny what remains in one's mind after more than fifty years.

In February 1943 I was drafted into the army; I was immediately assigned to MIS (Military Intelligence Service) because of my German and Japanese language background. There was a hiatus until the next intelligence school language class started and during that period the army used me to work as an under cover agent for internal security at Camp Upton on Long Island.



Both Henry and I were in the army in 1943 and both of us had unquestionable Germanic names. Because of the anti German sentiment we decided a change was essential. Heinz Horst was already mostly called Henry, Rolf Stephan had become Rolf, sometimes Rolfus and Ralph sounded to me much more American. We both

made applications for a legal change of names, Henry in Fredericktown, Virginia. I made my application in New York. It was mostly just a formality and certificates with the new names were issued.

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I carried out two assignments. It had become known that a sergeant of the 'permanent party' (the camp's permanent staff as opposed to the fresh daily intake of new soldiers) was selling weekend passes to raw recruits before they had served the required minimum of thirty days in the camp. This regulation was a safeguard to prevent completely green men, newly dressed in uniform, from mingling with the public without even the smallest amount of soldierly knowledge and possibly degrading the uniform they wore.

I was selected to pretend to be a draftee and placed in the hut of the sergeant under investigation. After three days I was approached by the sergeant and agreed that I would supply him with a bottle of brandy ("you make sure you bring me French stuff") when I returned to camp that night. Once I had been given the illegal pass, my commanding officer and I prepared a bottle of cognac with secret markings, which I handed to the sergeant, when I ostensibly returned to camp that evening. When he accepted the bribe my commanding officer and two waiting MP's entered the sergeant's quarters and arrested him. Accepting bribes and forging a pass was then punishable with incarceration and loss of rank. During the military trial the defense attempted to weaken the case by claiming that the sergeant had been 'set up'. This was freely admitted but the crime, under military law, was so great that the conviction stood.

My second assignment was of a political nature. Although the Soviet Union was our military ally, the United States was still fighting communism. It was known that of the hundreds of United Service Organizations looking after the welfare of the military during their leisure hours, there were a number created to disseminate communist propaganda. It was the task of my partner and I to visit as many of the leisure organizations as possible and determine which, if any, spread political garbage. After the first week we had the system down to a finely tuned exercise. Before looking for greener fields, we had calculated the average time anyone from the forces spent in a USO establishment was twenty minutes. Thus sufficient misinformation had to be spread in the first fifteen minutes to entice the visitor to want to stay and learn more. Since we were looking for this dangerous propaganda, it didn't take long to recognize any anti-American doctrines being spread. During several weeks of afternoon and evening visits to hundreds of service organizations we successfully discovered, and were responsible for later closing down, the pitiful sum of eighteen service clubs. As the saying goes, "Someone had to do the job".

When the start of the new language class became imminent I was given a furlough to return home. I then reported directly to my new assignment at the U. S. Army Japanese Language School at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, which became my home for the next six months. I graduated under the MIS command of General Bissell, was then sent to infantry camps in Alabama and Georgia for a month and finally transferred to Military Intelligence at the Prisoner of War camp at St Paul, Minnesota. The rest of my war service was at that camp.

When the war finished I applied for discharge. That was granted and I bought a tired Buick convertible. Everything about the car was worn and could not be

renewed. I bought as many old tires as I could find and headed for the east coast hoping the tire supply would last. Several punctures and blowouts occurred during the four days it took me to get to New York.

One of the early post war business developments concerned my work on sponges. With the war over there was no longer the urgent need for rayon. The factory that had produced rayon during the war years had all the required equipment and machinery to produce viscose that can be used to produce cellulose sponges. Henry and I discussed with Dr. Politzer the conversion of the Cleveland factory and installed all machinery to produce sponges on a semi automatic commercial basis.

We needed someone to introduce our product to the public and hired the Vice President Sales from the well-known New York department store, Macy's. Larry Stoll had all the knowledge required to set up a sales organization for an unknown product. We could not have found and selected a better person.

Larry set himself two goals. First, to develop a trade name that became a household word and, secondly, a product that could be mass-produced to allow lower manufacturing costs. He achieved both. We selected the product name *NYLONGE*, combining the word nylon with sponge. We entered into a long-time sales agreement with the 3M company who produced the well-known cleaning product *Scotchbrite*. We developed a laminating process attaching the *Scotchbrite* abrasive sheeting to our *Nylonge* sponges. The product was manufactured in four colours and packaged in plastic bags with just enough softener to prevent the sponges from growing hard and stiff when kept on the shelf.

The *Nylonge/Scotchbrite* sponges were an immediate success and still are produced and sold by the millions worldwide. Both Dr. Politzer and Larry Stoll have since passed away. The factory at Seventieth Street was sold and a new ultra modern factory built outside Cleveland.

## POST SECOND WORLD WAR

Andrew and Thomas Goeritz had been close friends since my childhood in Berlin. They had been living in Luxembourg when the war commenced. Their parents were anti the Nazi party and took their sons to London. The British Government sent both boys to an internment camp in Canada. Once war was over, we invited Andy to stay with us in our apartment in New York before returning to his family in London. We had a great time photographing New York while driving around in my newly acquired replacement convertible Buick that was fire engine red. Andy had mounted a tripod for the camera on the back seat. After Andy's internment and my army service we lashed out in rediscovered freedom and daily double dating. We had met the daughter of the Cuban Consul General in New York. In the afternoons, while being



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continuously chaperoned by her grandmother, she gave us rumba lessons that culminated in my winning a dancing contest.

Our favorite haunt was the *Cotillion Room* at the *Hotel Pierre*, at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Sixty-First Street. After generous tips had regularly changed hands with the *maître d'* we were automatically shown to the same table. It was close to the dance floor, across from the band, and allowed us to dance the latest craze. Sometimes that was leading a conga line and being applauded from the amused guests. This familiarity came in handy, even after Andy went back to London, as I would greatly impress my dates by being shown to the best table in the *Cotillion Room*.

Only two blocks away from the *Hotel Pierre* was *Reubens* where I frequently breakfasted. They were open twenty-four hours and I also loved to visit late at night. There, too, I had laid claim to be seated at the same table, by virtue of almost nightly attendance. The waiter knew exactly how I wanted to have the tartar steak served. That was without onion and with thin rye toast, followed by *Reuben's* famous specialty, cheesecake, and several cups of extra strong coffee.

Another nightclub we often went to was the *Martinique* on Fifty-Seventh Street near Sixth Avenue. Once we were hooked on rumbas and the newly introduced sambas from Brazil, we discovered that there were a growing number of nightclubs that played this new Latin style music. Like half of New York, I could not get enough of the wonderful rhythm. With the new music went several new drinks, the most commonplace rum and Coca Cola that was made famous by virtue of its own song. Sweet drinks became the rage, Southern Comfort and Coke, bourbon with Coke. Coca Cola's advertising had penetrated and brain washed the young population and as long as it was sweet, it became the accepted drink.

Sometimes, if I had a very special date, we went to the *Stork Club* on Fifty-Second Street. Unless you were a celebrity or a well-known personality, it was useless to try and make reservations for the same evening. There were usually crowds of people waiting outside the entrance for two purposes. Most were there to see important customers arrive in their chauffeur driven limousines and a small number waiting behind the red rope, controlled by a top hatted doorman, blocking off the entrance to the *Club*. A ten dollar note pressed into the doorman's hand usually made him relent and release the rope. Having passed the first hurdle, one was next confronted by the *maître d'* who supervised the assignment of tables. Tables that allowed the guests to see and be seen were in high demand.

In addition to these very public tables there was a rear room where mostly established clients of the *Club* were seated. The assignment of a good table was worth at least another ten dollar spot and only now were we in a position to call the waiter for the huge menu and impressive wine list. At one of my visits with one of the *Club's* regular clients, we were given a special treat and invited to visit the wine cellar. Made famous during the past days of prohibition, the

cellar was still separate and accessible only through a steel door hidden behind a sliding panel. It was now used to protect the magnificent French burgundy wines ranging up to several hundred dollars a bottle and ordered by the more affluent guests. Each table was decorated with a black ashtray showing a golden stork. The ashtray could be purchased for a mere fifteen dollars.

There were always exciting things to do in New York. For my birthday one year my brother presented me with a ticket to *Radio City Music Hall's* performance of *Gone With The Wind*. When I arrived I was able to enter the cinema foyer without having to join the long queue stretching for four city blocks. The movie had opened only a few days previously and Henry had ordered my ticket months before. *Radio City* was famous for its magnificent stage show with fifty-two superb 'Rockettes' performing before the beginning of the main feature. They were arranged in a straight line kicking their legs in unison like the best drilled soldiers. I remember the show also included Larry Adler, a well-known harmonica performer, much loved by his New York audience.

There are so many restaurants in New York that one could try a different one every day and still not visit half of them in a year. One of my parent's favorite was *Lüchow*, downtown at Fourteenth Street. It served wonderful German food and the old fashioned waiters enjoyed speaking German with us. Nobody worried about high cholesterol food in those days and I invariably ordered *Schweinshaxe mit Sauerkraut*, pig's knuckle with sauerkraut. My mother was especially fond of a little place on Seventy-Ninth Street, between First and Second Avenue, called *Old Vienna*. A Viennese/Hungarian band played old Austrian songs. When my mother felt very happy she could be persuaded to sing some of her former stage songs to the accompaniment of the band and delight of the mostly Viennese guests at the restaurant.

When we went to a theatre it was a fixed routine to have dinner after the show. We always tried to go to *Sardi's* where there were sketches of Broadway stars on the walls. On rare occasions we had dinner before the theatre and once, when we had reserved tickets, tried to obtain reservations at *Twenty One*, but hardly had enough time to do justice to the superb food and great wines before rushing off to the performance opening.

My dad's tailor had been Knize and I was automatically included in the routine of ordering a number of suits and coats. With these went a pilgrimage to Sulka who made our shirts and always had a selection of magnificent silk ties to blend with the suits.

My first crossing of the Atlantic was on 18 January 1947 on the Cunard liner *Queen Elizabeth* when I accompanied my parents to Europe. We ran into a typical Atlantic winter storm. I remember, Mr. Masaryk, the Czech diplomatic representative in Washington and son of the late Jan Masaryk, Czechoslovakia's first president, breaking his arm when he was flung off the massage table in the ship's gymnasium where I was exercising. The first night we were invited to sit at the captain's table, but for the rest of the trip we used a small private dining room. That was enjoyed by my mother and father, because

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of the solitude, but hated by me who looked for young company. The only other diner in that private suite was the young, but already well established movie actor, Burgess Meredith, who totally ignored us. We arrived at Southampton and took the Pullman boat train to London, being served tea and cakes on the journey.

My second Atlantic crossing by steamer was one year later when I again traveled with my father on the *Queen Elizabeth*, leaving New York on 10 January 1948, this time enjoying perfect weather in spite of the season. I could gladly have done without the twice-daily walks around the promenade deck that my father insisted upon. The most fun was the daily betting on the twenty-four hour mileage run, which was a considerable cash purse that I was lucky enough to win twice.

## BACK TO EUROPE

Long distance air travel was a new and novel experience in 1946. When I obtained my pilot's licence it was of course mandatory to maintain a log. To me it was simple to continue that practice as a passenger. I recorded the date, departure and arrival times, airline, aircraft type and its registration number, the sequential number of the respective flight, ocean crossings and time zones. The signatures of the respective flight's captain confirmed many entries. I often passed the logbook forward to the captains who confirmed the entry with their signatures.

As soon as commercial flights became available, we used PANAM to Europe, usually via Newfoundland and Ireland. Our first flight was on 8 February 1946 on an Air Transport Command DC4 via Gander and Shannon to London. After a year or so the stopover in Shannon was improved. Instead of waiting in draughty old hangers, PANAM converted a former Quonset hut into a reception and dining facility.

The flights from the United States were mostly scheduled to arrive very early in the morning. In spring and summer the sun was just rising as the plane landed in Ireland. After having clambered down a steep staircase from the plane you walked into a dining room where the tables were set with snow-white Irish linen and sparkling crystal, and gleaming silver ware. Usually I ate as quickly as possible so that I could spend more time in the adjoining shop, which sold all sorts of items duty free. There were rows of sports jackets made of Donegal tweed, cabinets with tablecloths and napkins made of Irish linen, packaged Irish crystal glasses for champagne and liqueurs, American cigarettes and Irish whisky. These were the days before the invention of credit cards, and all payments were made either by U. S. Dollar traveler's checks or with the then always acceptable 'greenback', the good old banknotes.

Dad usually carried small gifts to hand out. Mainly Parker '51' pens with VON KOHORN discreetly engraved. These were very effective and always resulted

in better service. Whenever we visited London we stayed at *Grosvenor House* in Park Lane. Vati had been an invited guest for the hotel's opening in 1929 and always remained loyal. When we arrived in England we were loaded down with food and nylon stockings for friends in postwar London. Overweight luggage was not taken very seriously, particularly when traveling first class. *Grosvenor House* used to send a car to the airport to collect us and in the late forties the traffic from Croydon to the city was fairly light.

My lasting impression of the hotel was the afternoon tea served in the huge lobby punctually at half past four. Coffee was not available in this early post war era but tea was served with slices of lemon and the thinnest imaginable white bread sandwiches with cucumber and watercress. What few restaurants there were still labored under the tough post wartime restrictions. Alexander Geddes, tall and always immaculately dressed in his morning suit, was the director of the hotel and at all times looked after us wonderfully. In later years when Richard Tauber junior was looking for a permanent home in London, through the good services of Mr. Geddes, Vati arranged for one of the apartments to be made available to him. He lived there for several years.

We had a number of friends and relatives in London, among them Eric and Senta Goeritz who had an apartment, almost next door to *Grosvenor House*, at 24 Park Lane. Their sons, Andrew and Thomas, were back in England from Canada and I saw them regularly when I visited London. They introduced me to several clubs in the city with entry often requiring membership that was very strictly controlled. Immediately after the war meat was still rationed but fish was readily available. *Cunninghams*, at 51 Curzon Street was open until ten at night and served superb seafood. We would often wind up there after going to a movie or show. Andrew maintained an apartment at East House in Rosemoor Street where, for the first time, I met Raymonde, a wonderful Parisienne, who soon after became Andrew's wife. Andy's brother Thomas and his wife lived at 35 Cadogan Square. An avid amateur flyer he died suddenly of a heart attack, not even thirty years old.

Considerable business in England and on the Continent made the establishment of an office in Europe advisable. Bombs had destroyed our old offices and factories. We were able to arrange for our operations to be headed by an old acquaintance, Trevor Edwards. He had formerly headed the technical department of Kirklees Limited, one of England's rayon plants equipped with Von Kohorn machinery. Our first office in bombed out London was in Slough Estate House at 16 Berkeley Street. Next we moved to Victoria House and later to 130 Mount Street at the corner of Berkeley Square. That was a former residence with a Bentley dealership below and across the street from the *Connaught Hotel*. Company secretary was Alma Feller, soon to be joined by two of our cousins, Dorli Winter and Gerard Bibo.

We often traveled by train from London to Peterborough where the factory of one of our main suppliers, Baker Perkins, was located.

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When the food situation in England had normalized, there were so many new restaurants of every description that the choice was difficult. One Italian place we frequented was *Leoni's Quo Vadis*, at 26 Dean Street in the West End. They had a display of paintings on their walls and I purchased an aquarelle of a nude lady that is still with me and now hangs in our bedroom in the Australian apartment.

Eight days after our arrival Vati and I flew from Croydon to Le Bourget in Paris and were met by Ernest Audrix, our former French representative. My father had been told that cousin Dorli was in the army and asked Monsieur Audrix to contact the authorities and ask for their help in finding her. A meeting was arranged by telephone and we met a few days later. She was still in the uniform of a lieutenant in the Free French Forces, Czech Division, having worked as the personal Czech-French interpreter of General de Gaulle. Once she was de-mobbed, Dorli went and lived in London with her mother and worked in our London office.

When we caught up with Gerry he was driving a United Nations Relief Agency truck from Central Europe to London. After escaping from a prison camp at Ebro in Spain, via France to England, he had joined the Free Czech Forces. After Pax Europa he had volunteered to assist UNRA in transporting food to the starving people. As a former tank commander it was logical for him to be assigned to head a convoy traveling from England to various destinations on the continent.

When Gerry first worked in our London office he roomed with Dorli and her mother in their home in Bayswater. During the war Dorli's widowed mother had married Ian Parsons. Dorli met her husband, Kamil Winter, when they both attended Prague University in the late 1930's. Kamil supported the communist party and when Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia they both fled to France. After the war Kamil returned to Prague and became the foreign language editor of *Rude Pravo*, a Czechoslovakian communist newspaper that had a large foreign following.

When I was back in New York Gerry arrived from London and came to tell me, "I have a big problem". His girlfriend was Bibi Fassmann and it seemed that her menstrual period was late. Newly arrived in the USA he had no one to talk to. Our family doctor was Fred Glauber, brother of Emil Glauber, Chief Engineer and Vice President of the Von Kohorn organization. I suggested a visit to Fred and the following day both went to his office on Park Avenue. He gave Bibi an injection and before the end of the week nature took its course, the threat of an unwanted pregnancy disappeared and life for Gerry again became peaceful. What neither Gerry nor Bibi knew was that Fred had been a university colleague of Bibi's father, Dr. Fassmann, the leading gynecologist in Karlsbad. I quietly blessed the medical rule of confidentiality.

While in Paris, thanks to my dad's connections, we had special permission to stay at *Hotel Crillon* next door to the American Embassy on Place de la Concorde. Those quarters were normally reserved for high-ranking American



officers. In later years Vati preferred to stay at the *George Cinq*, where the hotel's director, Max Blouet, looked after us impeccably, as only the French can. Over the years he became a friend of the family and after leaving Paris became director of the *Hotel Drake* on Park Avenue in New York. He was an avid tennis player and often played on my brother Henry's court in Greenwich, CT.

One of Vati's cousins, Viscountess Olga de Cognets des Kerdreoret, lived in Paris at Rue de Chabrol in the Tenth District. We never failed to meet her when we visited Paris. She was involved in the perfume industry and grew large white roses in her gardens at Grasse in Provence, near Cannes, supplying mainly Fragonard with her blooms. Her favorite restaurant was a small place, famous for its cheeses, named *La Quetsch* and located in the shadow of Notre Dame. It had superb burgundy wines, carefully aged cheeses, *baguettes* (long sticks of crispy French bread), fresh *croissants* at all hours of the day and waiters hovering to anticipate the slightest wish of 'Aunt Olga'. A visit to *La Quetsch* always proved to be an evening of particular gastronomic enjoyment. Olga also insisted that Mutti shop at Schiaparelli a place that mother came to adore because she had her own "vendeuse" (sales assistant).

Like most visitors to Paris we made the rounds of the well-known restaurants as well as lesser-known eateries, such as *Restaurant Korniloff* on rue Jean Mermoz in the Eighth District or the *Pergourdine* on Place St. Michel. We loved our repeated visits to *Fouquet* on the Champs Elysees and several smaller cafes in the streets leading off the main boulevards. We went of course to *Maxim's* and sat at one of the banquet tables beneath the magnificent stained glass ceiling. We went, saw and admired the incredible precision of the mostly naked dancers at the *Follies Bergère* and the *Moulin Rouge* in Montmartre. We also went to Montparnasse and took the lifts to the top of the Eiffel Tower.

A bit expensive but certainly great value was *La Tour d'Argent*, which specialized in ducks. Since 1890, and to this day, every diner ordering 'caneton' (pressed duck) received a numbered certificate. The numbering had commenced when the restaurant opened and when we visited our number was in tens of thousands. The restaurant was on the tenth floor of 15, Quai de la Tournelle in the Fifth district. Besides the wonderful food, the view from the restaurant overlooking the Seine and Notre Dame Cathedral was breathtaking.

*Prunier* was always famous for fresh fish and seafood, particularly caviar, but we had our own favorite restaurant for *bouillabaisse*. *Chez Tessier* at 11, rue Rameau in the Second District was unquestionably worth the trouble to get there. Another specialty cafe that we often visited for lunch served fresh mussels, *moules marinière*.

There were also some wonderful restaurants in the Bois de Boulogne and on the allée de Longchamp. We often ate at *Le Pre Catalan*, a chic place that my mother particularly liked. Every time we visited France, and especially Paris, we all put on so much weight - and enjoyed every kilo we added.

In the twenties and early thirties Mutti frequented the House of Molyneux, where most of her dresses were made. She was delighted when, after the war, she

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met up with the *vendeuse* who used to look after her, and ordered some dresses for herself and her daughter in law Joyce.

In spite of their great success with tourists, we were never much interested in nightclubs. The hundreds of *boîtes* opening everywhere in Paris were smoky and noisy, not what we enjoyed, but exactly what the large number of visitors to Paris demanded.

Within a few weeks of the end of the war Vati had been appointed by the government to head a United States investigative team. Their job was to study the effect of the war on the manufacturing potential of Germany and axis forces' synthetic fiber industry. He held the honorary rank of colonel and, in his tailor-made uniform, maintained his ever immaculate style. He took with him a group of technicians from our New York organization. They spent several weeks in Europe visiting factories, determining their future capacity after repairs had been carried out. In addition consideration was given to the advisability of permitting the contents to be dismantled and shipped to the Soviet Union as war reparation. The work culminated in several book-length reports, printed by the Government in Washington for general use of the synthetic



fiber industry. I accompanied my father on some of the visits. At the time it had become fashionable in New York to display original paintings of Old Masters in your apartment so I set about to acquire some. Because of the large number of stolen paintings that were circulating I enlisted the assistance of one of Vati's friends, Jim Garrison from the US Embassy. He organized a reputable local art dealer and I was able to buy a number of valuable renaissance paintings while in Berlin. Jim Garrison was in charge of Research Development and Restitution one of the U. S. supervisory agencies in Vienna.

Slowly civilians replaced the military command and a career diplomat again headed the American embassy. The new ambassador was the sister of John Foster Dulles, U. S. Foreign Secretary. Eleanor Dulles held this difficult post in the four-partite city, with American, British, French and Russian occupational forces facing each other every day.

In Vienna all hotels had been taken over by the military authorities. When we first arrived we were fortunate to rent an apartment on the Kärntner Ring, next to the *Imperial Hotel*, occupied by the U. S. Forces. Later, one of the first hotels released by the military authorities was the *Astoria*, on the Kärntner Strasse, owned by Frau Hanl, and it became the von Kohorn family headquarters.

Vati was able to take a lease on one of the former great alpine hunting estates



owned by our lawyer, Dr. Ludwig Draxler. The hunt was located at Hütschlag in the Voralpen. Leopold Hotwagner, our chauffeur, drove Vati and me there, where we spent the night at the hunting lodge. The next morning my father decided to give scrambling up the mountain a miss. Before sun-up the game keeper and I left the lodge and started climbing up to the Pizag-Kaar where we settled down for about an hour. Suddenly the game keeper, who had been looking up the mountain side with his binoculars, touched me gently on my arm, put his finger over his lips to indicate silence, handed me his field

glasses and pointed. I had some difficulty focusing on what he was trying to show me. Finally I saw that he had spotted a magnificent stag with a multi-point trophy head. We remained without moving and watched as the stag came slowly nearer.

The hunter's binoculars had gradicule markings engraved on the lens that allowed me to determine the distance from the animal with fairly close precision. The buck was now between 150 to 200 meters away and very quietly I adjusted the knob on the telescope of the rifle, setting the adjustment at two hundred. I had taken off my heavy cape when the temperature rose, and now carefully folded it into a thick pile, placed it on the ground before me and rested the rifle barrel thereon. There was little wind and thus it was not a problem. My rifle had two triggers. One to cock the hammer and the second one, with a hair trigger action, fired if barely touched. We did not dare whisper and several times the gamekeeper checked the direction of the wind by holding up a wet finger.

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I was of course in a hurry to shoot, but he signaled several times to me to sit tight. Finally he indicated to go ahead and fire. I took a deep breath, held it and, when the cross hairs were exactly over the buck's chest, I squeezed the trigger. The animal dropped on its forelegs and then fell over. The gamekeeper, very formally, shook hands with me. When we walked up to the dead buck he cut a small twig off a pine, dipped it into the animal's blood and stuck it into my hatband and turned to me:

“Waidmans Heil!” meaning, “Hail to the hunter.” It was a local hunting custom that indicated a clean shot, without the need for a *coup de grace*. We then left the animal to be carried down the mountain by two strong young men.

We returned to the hut, had a cold lunch and prepared to climb the Hubalmhöll in the afternoon. The procedure was almost the same. We climbed, bedded down on a rise and waited for another buck. The sun had set behind a mountain to our rear and if I was lucky I would be able to shoot down into the valley after watching the animals approaching on the opposite side. Finally a number of animals appeared. I followed the routine from the morning and was fortunate to bag a second buck, with a truly magnificent trophy of twelve points. After returning to the hut, very tired but very proud, our car was waiting and Vati and I returned to Vienna.

Another time my father had invited Jim Garrison to accompany me on a hunt for chamois. Both of us were lucky and we returned with two fine bucks each. The trophies of the deer and chamois as well as their eyeteeth and the hairs taken from the center of their backs, were prepared for shipment back to my home in the United States.

One of my hobbies was collecting Austrian stamps. I placed a few ads in local papers asking for only complete stamp collections. I then looked them over, negotiated a fair price and paid in US Dollars. I would then simply remove all pages of Austrian stamps and immediately sell the remainder to Anton Wodak, a stamp dealer, who was glad to purchase a collection that had not been 'picked over'. When Jill and I visited Austria in the nineteen sixties, I met up with Fred again and took him to dinner in a restaurant in the Wiener Wald.



## EGYPT

After the military air transport flights for civilians had terminated, the most convenient travel to Cairo was by TWA on a Constellation. Henry negotiated a series of contracts and our Company founded the first American-Egyptian joint venture with Banque Misr and formed its offshoot, Société Misr p1our la



Rayonne, SAE. It's chairman was Hafez Afifi Pasha, Ambassador to the Court of St. James in London. He had also recently been appointed the first chairman of UNESCO.

Another of the directors of the new board was Saba Habashi Pasha who was our lawyer and resided in Koubeh Gardens. Later he was appointed Minister of Commerce by King Farouk and granted

a knighthood by Queen Elizabeth II. Saba was an Egyptian and member of the ancient Coptic Christian Church.

The Egyptian government, beginning with King Fuad and later King Farouk, bestowed titles on its citizens. The lowest rank was the title Bey, similar to the British Sir, and that of Pasha, equivalent to the English Lord. Most of the Egyptians in those days, if seeking higher education, attended foreign universities, even though the Universities of Cairo and Alexandria could grant doctorates.

For our new industry we acquired land and the factory was built at Kafr el Dawar, a small village on the Mahmudia Canal halfway between Cairo and Alexandria. We appointed Dr. Ali Labib Gabr as our architect. He was Professor of Architecture at the University of Cairo and the factory and office buildings became a monument to his design. First Mohamed Gammal Bey, and later Dr. Sakr Bey, was made the Managing Director. Dr. Tewfik Topouzada was appointed General Manager and Mustafa Hosny placed in charge of the plant operation. We sent a large team of technical experts from our overseas



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offices to train and supervise the more than five thousand local workers. There was Dr. Dorransoro, a Basque who had worked for Ducilo in Buenos Aires. Also from Buenos Aires, but a Filipino, was our Chief Chemist Dr. Irureta. Heading the laboratories was Labib Alibeckof from Russia. Among the engineering staff was Edgar Westfeld, an American, originally from Germany. The annual von Kohorn staff Christmas party, which I sometimes attended, was a virtual small United Nations.

Among other Egyptian directors was Sayed el Lozy Bey, chairman of a large



silk mill, Gammal Mansour, a young Cairo business man, and Saad el Gamal, who looked after our daily interests. When the new company was capitalized,



King Farouk acquired one third of the company's capital, the von Kohorn family held one third and Banque Misr the remaining third.

Once the plant had successfully commenced operation, my father was invited to present himself at the royal palace in Cairo to be decorated by King

Farouk. The official ceremony was not handled by the King but by one of his equerries. Oscar had to get clearance from the American ambassador, John Erhardt, before he was permitted to accept a foreign decoration. The King was an autocratic ruler with complete right over the life and death of his subjects and was known as a ruthless womanizer. It was said that he ordered any female he desired to report to the palace. In one case, when his roving eyes selected the wife of one of his army officers who did not cherish his King's attention to his wife, he transferred the unfortunate man to an army post in the desert on the border with Sudan. He was also famous for his generosity to any woman he had selected and usually paid them off with magnificent jewelry.

He enjoyed going to nightclubs and at several of his favorite haunts a table was permanently reserved for him, identified by a single red rose. He would suddenly appear with his entourage, always wearing dark glasses, even at night, was served with his favorite French champagne while watching the floorshow. He particularly appreciated the belly dancers that, in line with the Egyptian concept, were fleshy and middle aged. Believing that young dancers had not yet reached the maturity to perform at their best. He would laugh and clap his hands in unison with the other guests, shouting *yallah, yallah* at a particularly lengthy rolling of the dancer's hips and belly or vibrating of her buttocks, all the while maintaining the rest of her body in perfect control.

One of the King's favorite hobbies was his collection of automobiles. For state occasions he was driven in his bullet proof black Rolls Royce. We would see that car again years later in the Philippines, then owned by Amado Araneta. King Farouk often personally drove his fire engine red Mercedes, the gift of a German admirer. That car had a large royal crest emblazoned on both doors and was equipped with a claxon and siren. The King never stopped at a street crossing and drove at full speed through his cities. When one heard the claxon, it was time to pull over and get out of the way, fast.

In the late forties the King was already getting very fat. It was whispered around that, as a result of an accident, he was almost blind and had been castrated. The full story was told to us by Lady Habashy's brother, an attending doctor after the accident. Shortly after the war, while British troops still occupied Egypt, King Farouk was driving himself on the desert road from Alexandria to Cairo when he crashed his car. He was thrown clear and very badly injured. It was fortunate that a British medical unit was nearby and rushed to the scene, set up a field station and operated on the King. His eyes were said to have been damaged and the resulting scars mostly hidden by the dark glasses he always wore. His internal injuries, however, were of a major nature and the emergency operation performed on Farouk could not reverse the castration the accident had caused. At that time the King already had three daughters, borne by his first wife, the sister of the Shah of Iran.

This misadventure, which had been kept secret until after the King's death, is particularly significant. When the King married again, his new wife produced a son and heir, a son who quiet obviously could not have been fathered by Farouk. The nature of the death of Farouk is a continuation of his life style.

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After he fled Egypt on the royal yacht, he sought refuge in Italy. He lived there for some years, spending much of it at the gambling tables in exclusive clubs and eating food in the finest restaurants. The night of his death he had been gambling until late before sitting down to a mammoth meal. He fell forward and died at the dinner table.

After the fall of the Kingdom in 1952 the new government sequestered King Farouk's shares. With Banque Misr already holding one third of the capital, we thought it prudent to offer our remaining third to the bank and terminate our investment in Egypt.

In the early days of our visits to Egypt we stayed at the famous *Hotel Shepherd*, not far from the royal palace. I often had breakfast on the terrace overlooking the busy main street. Next door was the *Pohomul Brothers* department store which carried the most elaborate stock of merchandise from cigarettes to jewelry. Not far was *Café Groppi*, which served the best ice cream, wonderful cakes, all sorts of coffee and hot chocolate. Across the street was a Greek owned tobacco shop that carried a huge selection of cigarettes from all parts of the world, stored in a humidor to counteract the dryness of the nearby desert.

Through the years new hotels were built and we stayed at the *Semiramis*, looked after by the Swiss manager Herr Rolander, then at the *Heliopolis Palace*, later the *Hilton*, and other more up to date places. From 1949 on we maintained a guest apartment in Cairo and later a guesthouse near the factory at Kafr el Dawar. One day my father and I were awakened by the hotel staff in Cairo and advised to go to the garden. A university students' riot had broken out and, shortly after, the front of the hotel was set alight. We quickly left Cairo and drove to Alexandria where we moved into the *Hotel Cecil*. The same evening local students attacked that hotel and successfully burned it down. We escaped again and driving back to Kafr el Dawar spent the night in the guesthouse of the Misr Company's cotton mill. From then on our hotel in Alexandria was the *Beau Rivage* that was closer to the desert road and reduced the traveling time by cutting out the city traffic.

In the mid forties there were only a few good restaurants in Cairo. One of the better was on the roof garden of the Royal Cairo Automobile Club. Lit by colorful electric lights and decorated with potted trees, the specialty of the house was various types of meat roasted on spits over charcoal fires. Usually a local band played Egyptian music. Waiters in these establishments always wore white uniforms topped with the ubiquitous *fez*. A uniformed doorman appeared to have great pleasure summoning the guests' drivers and cars by blowing a piercingly shrill whistle that could be readily heard over the music on the roof garden. Another fine restaurant was *Khomais*, which prided itself on *kebabs* and *shashliks* served with sauces of varying degrees of spiciness.

Over the years my parents, brother and I made numerous trips to Egypt and we had become very friendly with Hafez Afifi Pasha, Egyptian Ambassador to the United Kingdom. This friendship resulted in his extending an invitation to use

his guesthouse. I accepted that and went there on my honeymoon.

My parents, who had visited Egypt in the early thirties on their way to Japan, were happy to visit again in the late forties and, having ample time, went to see the many tourist attractions. Camels and their human burdens were always interesting to watch. The camel drivers near the pyramids beat their beasts with whips, more for show than affect, while the animals looked back at them from their huge brown, rheumy eyes, surrounded by very long lashes. Their dun colored hides were invariably molting and their knobbly knees knocked together while walking daintily on their long thin legs and huge hooves. Tourists were often picked up at the *Menna House* hotel from where they rode the short distance to the pyramids. There they had their pictures taken, got off the camels and thence into taxis or tour buses to return to their hotels. Because of its location, *Menna House* was the perfect tourist starting point. Colored lights were always strung around the garden and, several nights each week, one of the highlights of the tourists' package tours was a superb self-service buffet. One of my short local trips from Alexandria was to Mersa Matruh, where I stayed at the *Lido Hotel*. Mersa was still famous from the recent war years, although its importance has waned much since those days.

## PERU, CHILE AND BRAZIL

With the war over and after having assisted the US government Oscar was now able to devote time to his own affairs. The factories in Europe had been destroyed and he did not see any possibility of immediately re-establishing our operations. Thus he looked to South America where our first contact had been made in Chile in 1940.

In October 1946 Vati and I flew to Lima and negotiated for the establishment of the country's first rayon plant, Rayon Peruana, S. A. We established a company in which we had a substantial equity position and supplied all the machinery and equipment from the United States. We elected Luis Dibos as president and Carlos Dogny Larco as our representative director. Carlos, a dashing young Peruvian of Spanish decent, came from one of the wealthy early colonial families and was a well known ladies' man in the capital city. He once showed me his *pied à terre* that was designed to amaze and overwhelm his female visitors. A Peruvian surfboarder champion, he had spent some time in Hawaii to learn the, then new, sport. He had fallen in love with the Hawaiian design of houses and had his architect build him a small one-room cottage.

The *piece de resistance*, however, was an installation on the roof that simulated falling rain. In Peru's arid climate the appearance of rain cascading down the windows was fascinating. There was a circular bed with a nearby refrigerator and controls to start and stop a record player. Such things are commonplace since the development of electronics in the 1970's but were unique in 1947 particularly in South America. On days when the awe-inspiring waves of the



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Pacific Ocean piled on to the Peruvian shore, Carlos demonstrated to girlfriends his agility on the old fashioned, very heavy Hawaiian hardwood surfboards. Then the young ladies were whisked to his Hawaiian cottage, plied with *Pisco sours*, a dangerous local drink, and treated to an evening of music and lavish entertainment.

I had asked Carlos to take me to a bullfight and he arranged two special seats in the President's box for a *corrida de toros* when the darling of Peru, Manolete, appeared. There may have been greater matadors since then, but in 1947 he was considered the finest bullfighter. He fought six bulls that afternoon, all of them brave and brought to extreme rage by the lances of the *picadors* who were padded while riding well-protected horses. Hooked *bandarillas* were placed into the bulls' necks by the skilled *banderilleros*. Manolete dispatched every bull with a perfectly executed thrust of his sword and was twice awarded both ears and tail of the animals. He was never satisfied unless he could be



seen being thrust aside by the bull when he made one of his unbelievably close *pasos de la muerte* (the pass of death) with his red cape folded over his sword. The spectators in the arena threw seat cushions, money and flowers into the bullring. A pair of horses was used to remove the carcasses that were then given to one of the local hospitals to be used for food for their patients. I knew I would be apprehensive of the killing but soon got carried along in the excitement of the fight. Many years later

I saw a second rate bull fight in the arena of Las Palmas on the Grand Canaries, which was a great let down. Once you had seen Manolete fight, other matadors looked like amateurs.

Peru was a great producer of silver and has fashioned beautiful silverware for centuries. *Casa Welch* was a renowned shop for tableware and our parents ordered exquisite silver trays and platters for their home in New York. Plates were individually engraved and hand-sculpted by local artists and, when used for twelve place settings, made a stunning picture in the dining room.

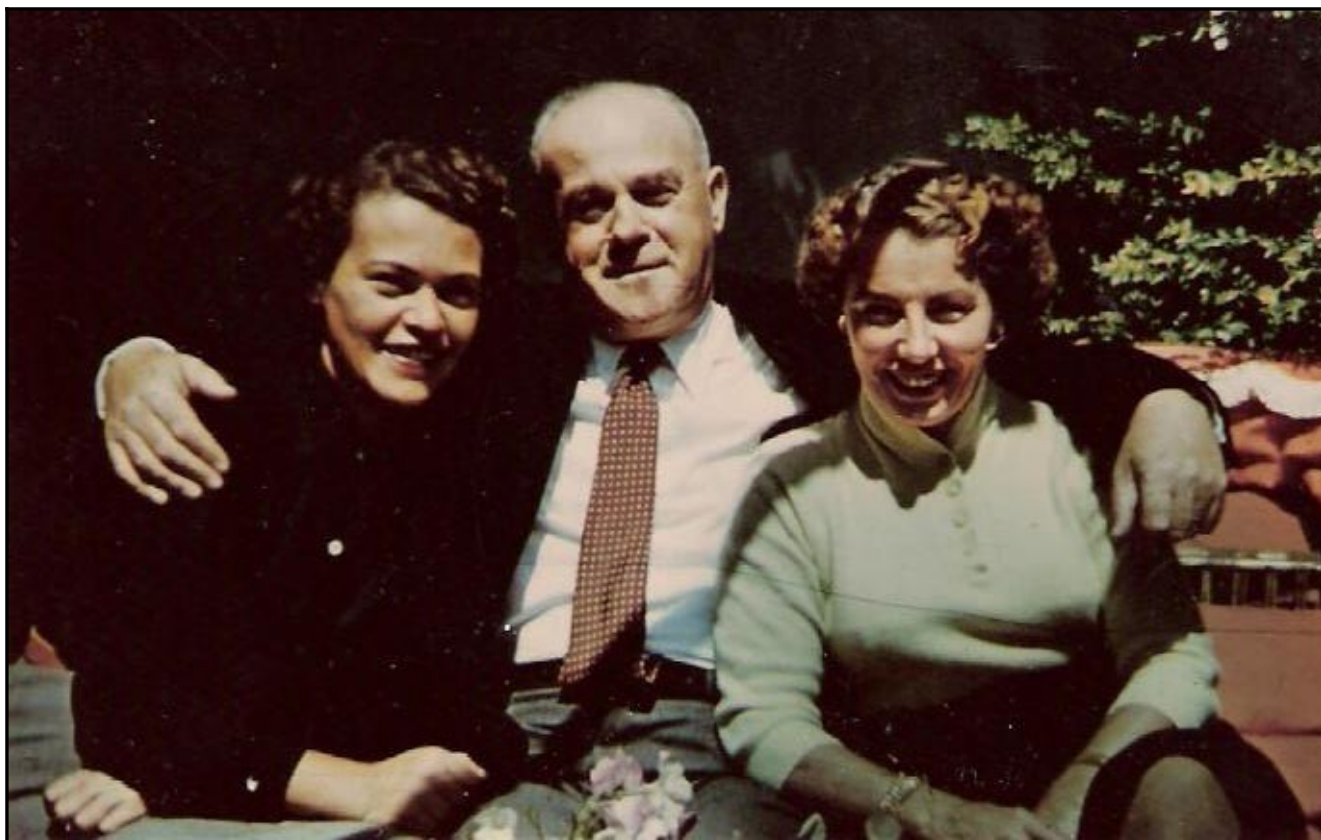
Henry had spent several weeks in Chile prior to 1941 and, with Jose Said, proprietor of Said y Hijos, negotiated the supply of machinery to an existing plant. Henry established a good relationship with Marcial Mora, the then foreign



minister, and his friendship with Marcial and his family continued for many years.

My parents and I made our first trip to Santiago in 1946 to negotiate for a new company and factory. We used *Hotel Crillon* on Santiago's main shopping street, Calle Valle, as our base. Later we changed to the new *Hotel Carera*, which was ten floors high and had a swimming pool on the roof. It was diagonally across from the presidential palace *La Moneda* on the *Plaza Constitucion*. We took a controlling interest in the new company, *Rayonhil, S. A.*, which was eventually listed on *La Bolsa* (the stock exchange).

The plant was built at Llo Lleo, near Viña del Mar. Bosko Babarovic was appointed managing director and our lawyer was Ismael Edward. We needed an experienced plant manager and through the assistance of Marcial were able to obtain a visa and bring our cousin Leo Kohorn and his wife Gerti to Chile. He



had previously managed *Filatura de Matase Artificiala* at Lupeni in Rumania, the rayon plant built by us in 1939. After he had finished the work of overseeing the construction in Chile we put him in charge of our rayon plant in Lima, *Rayon Peruana, S. A.*

The factory in Chile proved very successful. Our fellow directors were Carlos Camus, Victor Chacon, Felipe Herrera, Orlando Letelier and German Pico. German was the former Minister of Finance, and with his wife Dorita owned the *La Prensa* newspaper. Felipe Herrera was later to become president of the Inter-American Development Bank. Orlando Letelier became Foreign Minister and later Chilean ambassador to Washington, where he was murdered.

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For some time our agent in Chile was Hugo Mitchell, an American and proprietor of Mitchell and Mitchell, a well-respected Santiago business establishment.

High up in the Andes above Santiago was a ski resort hotel at Bariloche. Somehow I had time to make a visit. I remember, when we drove up the winding road, we had to stop before reaching the top and adjust the carburetor to get enough air for a proper combustion mixture. Modern cars and a new highway up the mountain have eliminated that inconvenience.

At the end of our first visit to Santiago in 1946 we flew to Argentina and on to Brazil. Rio de Janeiro's international airport was in the middle of the town on the Guanabara Bay across from Niteroi. On the way to Copacabana beach we passed the famous Sugar Loaf with the cable car station leading up to the statue of Christ on Corcovada Mountain, overlooking the city.

There was an existing rayon plant of an outmoded design in Sao Paulo owned by Francisco Matarazzo, an Italian count. We supplied him with up-to-date machinery. With the owners of a large paper mill and cement factories, my father commenced negotiations for the installation of modern plants to produce rayon and staple fiber. Supply of the machinery would come from the United States and England. The owners of the new industry, Companhia Nitro Quimica Brasileira, were Dr. Jose Emirio de Moraes and Samuel Klabin. His wife, a Viennese, became a very good friend of my mother. Dr. Eduardo Sabino de Oliveira managed the plant located at Sao Miguel near Sao Paulo. Within eight days the agreement was successfully completed. We did not take an equity interest in this venture.

The de Moraes family were friends of the Guinle family, who owned the *Copacabana Palace Hotel* where we always stayed. The hotel was on Copacabana beach and our rooms overlooked the glorious bay where, from early in the morning until late at night, masses of people could be seen sunbathing and exercising.

Several years later I made visits to Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro to arrange the supply of raw materials and replacement machinery. If it was feasible I tried to time visits to coincide with the annual Carnival or Mardi gras so I could watch the fantastic parades and the samba contest. The hotel had a gambling casino that required dinner jackets in the evening. Part of the hotel was the famous *Golden Room* nightclub, usually with a well known American band in residence. I remember the silly little game the hotel put on the morning after my parents' first arrival. The hotel director came to our suite and presented the hotel's 'Golden Book' for them to sign. It had names of famous movie stars, bandleaders, politicians and royalty. After signing the book it was quickly removed before I had a chance to study the names.

I went several times across the street directly onto famous Copacabana beach and of course remembered particularly the bronzed female Cariocans. They were often dressed only in the bottom half of string bikinis and that attire was supposedly an invention of the local beach population.



The most memorable steak restaurant on this trip was in Buenos Aires and called *La Cabaña*. It was world renowned and presented every visitor with one of its named steak knives.

In the late forties the flights from New York to Buenos Aires involved numerous stops because of the limited fuel range of the planes. When flying down the east coast, first came Miami, Florida, then Tocumen in Panama, Belem and Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, finally Buenos Aires. Whenever possible we avoided these lengthy and mostly dull flights. We preferred the longer west coast route as it enabled us to visit our factories in Lima and Santiago. The west coast route stops included Bogota in Colombia, Quito in Ecuador, Lima and Arequipa in Peru, Antofagasta and Santiago in Chile. Then we would cross the Andes to Buenos Aires and visits to our clients and finally, north to Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo.

In the early years most flights were on DC3's. On the flight from Santiago across the Andes to Buenos Aires bottles of oxygen were available to alleviate the problems of thin air at such high altitude. The DC4's had oxygen masks and flew a little higher, usually past the imposing figure of the *Christ of the Andes* statue. In later planes the cabins were pressurized and the altitude no longer affected passengers.

DC4's, Stratocruisers, Constellations, then the various models of DC6, DC7 and finally the big Boeings replaced the DC3's. The planes I shall always remember were the wonderful Stratocruisers, particularly those fitted out as 'sleepers'. Their 4,600mile range meant only a single stop between New York and Buenos Aires. After the usual sumptuous meals and French champagne, two seats were laid flat to form one bed and a second bed would emerge from the space nowadays taken up by the overhead luggage compartment. I had traveled with my father, sitting next to him in the aisle seat. After dinner the steward asked us whether we were ready to go to bed and suggested we go to the rest room to don our pajamas while he and his helper opened up the beds. They were made

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up with proper sheets, side curtains attached to the top and bottom berths to give privacy, with a small ladder hooked on to climb to the upper berth. It was similar to the sleepers on trains, except that of course we traveled at a speed of many hundreds of kilometers an hour and at a height of several kilometers while racing towards Argentina.

The Stratocruiser (Model 377) was a Boeing and based on the war time B29 bomber and set new standards for luxurious travel. The cabin was wider than other craft, tastefully decorated with gold appointed dressing rooms. A circular stairway led to the lounge on the lower deck. The planes could take up to 100 people or be arranged as a sleeper with 28 sets of bunks.

I always enjoyed trying out different airlines on the long flights and apart from ever present PANAM, selected Aerolinias Argentina, PANAGRA, previously called Panamerican Grace Airlines, Panair do Brazil, another former PANAM offshoot, REAL, VASP, Cruzeiro do Sul and VARIG, the new Brazilian airlines. On the west coast I had flown the Chilean national line, LAN, the Ecuadorian line AREA, the Venezuelan line AVIANCA, and several others.

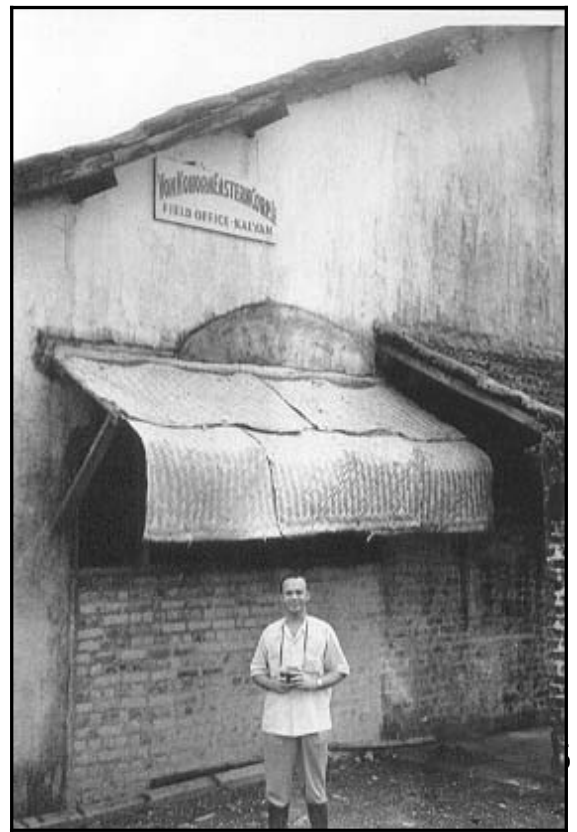
## INDIA

After the war Duncan Stratton, our former agents in India, did not re-open their offices. Expecting considerable business from the Indian continent, we decided to open our own. We engaged a French engineer, Jean Duplant, who had lived many years in the United States and was married to an Anglo-Indian. Jean worked for Westinghouse in India and had an excellent understanding of, and affinity with, the Indian mentality. He had good connections with large Indian companies that we wished to contact.

Originally our office was in Fort Street but later we moved into rooms in the *Taj Mahal Hotel*, Bombay. After the war the '*Taj*' had been modernized and bathrooms added to each room. Due to some structural problem Room 424 could not be modernized and Jean had negotiated a long-term advantageous rental agreement. That allowed us to convert the considerable space into a very pleasant unit. The room had a large balcony facing the ocean and, after we had lowered the ceiling, enclosed and air-conditioned the entire area, we had a most comfortable office. The convenience of having all of the '*Taj*'s' facilities available made us the envy of all visitors. Those facilities included a Post Office, the hotel's switchboard and the luxury of having only to push a button for room service or for a pageboy to instantaneously appear. When pulling up at the entrance to the hotel a uniformed, turbaned doorman would greet the arrivals by standing at attention and placing two fingers to the peak of his turban.

Whenever any of the Von Kohorn staff flew into Bombay, they would be put up in one of the guest rooms on the fourth floor of the '*Taj*' and only had to walk a few steps to the office. All our business in the later partitioned sub continent, which included Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, was carried out under the name of *Von Kohorn Eastern Corporation*, a company incorporated in the Bahamas.

My many trips to India were required for the negotiations with potential clients of the Von Kohorn organizations. One of our earliest clients was Ghanshyamdas Birla (called GD), the well known Indian industrialist whose enormous wealth financed much of Ghandi's independence movement. It was in the grounds of GD's residence in Bombay that Mahatma Ghandi was shot by a political zealot. My negotiations with the Birla organization were mostly with GD's son Bhasant Kumar (BK) and his aide, Cavas Lalkaka. Cavas had been appointed 'man-in-charge' of some of Birla's wide flung operations. He was a Parsee and former head of Birla's Indian Air Transport. The airline operated from offices in Bombay,





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while Bhasant Kumar had his offices in Calcutta. After lengthy negotiations we supplied one of the Birla rayon plants in West Bengal at Kalyan with machinery and technical know-how. To assist with this we decided to establish a "Field Office" to operate under our Indian Von Kohorn Eastern operations. It was only logical to set up this office in the vicinity of the factory we were building at Kalyan. When I visited our operation, it was the rainy season and I was protected by gumboots from the muddy approaches. The rain unfortunately poured through the window openings and my first job was to protect the interior by building a rough cover. I then quickly had a shingle made showing our name hung on the outside. Later I concluded a contract with Birla for the Von Kohorn organization to furnish a turn-key installation for a new plant to be erected near Bombay.

We also supplied machinery, equipment and technical operations to the Indian Rayon Corporation's new factory that we built in Saurashtra, ultimately acquiring a substantial number of shares in the new flotation. Having successfully arranged for the financing of this venture, we were called to invest in other plants in India. We became major shareholders in a nylon factory near Bombay but the largest shareholder was one of India's leading jewelers, Nanubhai Jhaveri. As part of our negotiations we also provided partial financing from the United States through our own finance company the *Financial and Development Fund, Inc. of New York*. Nanubhai found other investors from India's former rulers.

From the first day of operations the plant was extremely successful. One day Nanubhai was visiting New York and presented my mother, sister-in-law and wife each with a superb star sapphire "to match the factory's superb profits". That sort of partner was always welcome.

Nanubhai lived in the penthouse of one of the finest buildings near the Malabar Hills in Bombay. The entire apartment was built in marble and, although very modern, the architect had incorporated the Mogul style with round archways leading from room to room. An enormous terrace surrounded the entire floor and chiseled marble fretwork walls allowed access to the cooling sea breezes. The many rooms had wonderful views of the sea.

As a person of great integrity and honesty, Nanubhai had been chosen by the new Indian government to determine the value of the maharajahs' jewelry. The government had decided to tax wealth rather than income and had specifically defined wealth to include jewelry. Some families were described as owning rubies the size of hens eggs, emeralds as large as a fist and, still unpolished, diamonds by the thousands kept in small leather pouches.

Many maharajahs had come to trust Nanubhai and often asked his advice on how some of their wealth could best be invested. Thus he was of great help to our organisation.

Nanubhai was a devout Hindu. He maintained his personal guru who lived in one of the apartment's many rooms. The guru was always dressed only in a loincloth with a modern wristwatch, a garland of flowers around his neck and a

yellow paint mark in the middle of his forehead. He conducted hourly prayers and controlled Nanubhai and his family's daily manner of both business and private life. Guided by astrological calculations, he advised his master as to the most opportune times to enter into commercial agreements and family festivities. It is difficult to scoff at these beliefs if one sees the positive results of the guru's guidance. Nanubhai, after having decided to become involved in business with the von Kohorn family, kept us waiting for several days until he was signaled the time to sign the legal documentation. We were requested to be at Nanubhai's apartment at three o'clock in the morning and, at the precise minute, in the presence of the guru, signed the contract establishing our future most successful partnership.

Another client was the Mysore Acetate and Chemicals Company Limited. We took a large part of the shares and our major partners were Their Highnesses the Maharaja of Gwalior, the Maharajah of Baroda and the Maharaja of Travancore. In spite of such illustrious backers and participants, or maybe because of them, the achievement of financial success took many years. The Indian government was curbing the might of the former rulers and many of the princes' business involvements were frustrated.

Another of the former rulers with whom I had close contact, was the Maharaja of Bhavnagar. I had several discussions with His Highness and had mentioned my interest in hunting. He invited me on a tiger shoot and sent one of his private planes to Bombay for me. Bhavnagar is a small state on the east coast of the Saurashtra Peninsula, about three hundred kilometers due north of Bombay. It was covered with jungle and had an enormous wealth of timber. The Gulf of Cambay separated it from Baroda and transport was only possible by plane or water. Since tigers were menacing several of his villages and had killed a number of natives, the Maharaja paid a



bounty of five hundred rupees for every one destroyed. In spite of my having

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been left at a predetermined spot, with gun cocked, waiting for a tiger to materialize, I had no luck that night. The Maharaja of Baroda, who was the guest of honor and was placed not far from my location, bagged a large specimen.

The most impressive of our visits to Indian rulers was our audience with the Nizam of Hyderabad (about 600 kilometers from Bombay). My brother, his wife Joyce, Jean Duplant and I flew on 18 February 1947 to call on His Highness. Internal flights were mostly with DC3's and we left Bombay on Air India VT-AUB at half past eight in the morning and set down on the Hyderabad runway a couple of hours later. We stayed in a hotel in Secunderabad about twenty kilometers north of the capital. Our audience was in the afternoon and a hired car took us to the Nizam's palace, located on top of a small hill. In 1947 the Nizam was already an old man and we had been warned of his eccentricity and idiosyncrasies. Walking across the dusty, unswept courtyard to the palace entrance we passed a large number of antiquated trucks, covered by tarpaulins and with wheels removed.

The Nizam was in those days the richest man in the world. He was also known as the stingiest person in the world. His enormous family wealth, amassed over many generations dating back to 1713, came from the taxes extracted from the subjects of his vast empire. The underground treasure vaults had been filled by earlier ancestors. Wanting to avoid the cost of excavating more costly tunnels from the rocky formation on which the palace had been built, the Nizam had been advised of a most economical solution. He simply converted much of his treasure into gold ingots. He then bought a number of old trucks, filled them with the ingots and placed a guard with a loaded shotgun on each vehicle. This method had successfully survived both World Wars and would probably still operate today were it not for the Indian government. They terminated the princely rulers with Hyderabad being absorbed in 1950. While the maharajas were rulers of states, similar to kings, the Nizam ruled a country and rated an imperial gun salute.

When we were ushered into his reception chamber we were taken aback by the poverty of the furniture and surroundings. Although there were magnificent French pieces, the fabrics were disintegrating and torn. The gold paint of the wood had flaked or rubbed off and bare timber showed through. When the Nizam approached, he shuffled, wearing slippers, an old *dhoti* and a cheap cotton turban loosely wound around his head. We were later told that he wore his clothes until they fell off his body. He slept at night on an old bedstead made of a wood frame and woven leather webbing but no mattress. We were offered tea, small cakes and a container with various spices and betel nuts. After fifteen minutes of talks with His Highness, translated by his male secretary, we were excused and returned to our car. We did not see another visitor or senior servant except for the guards and the man who served the tea.

From the palace we drove back to Secunderabad and our hotel. We had been assigned huge rooms. Mine was open on two sides, with the bed in the middle of the room surrounded by a mosquito net hanging from a hook in the ceiling

and tucked under the mattress. The floor was black and white marble squares like a chessboard. My brother, his wife and I had a joint bathroom with an old fashioned enameled bathtub on cast iron legs. There was a large showerhead suspended above it and Henry was anxious to take a shower after the hot and humid afternoon spent at the palace. He stood in the tub and turned on the water. I heard his loud shriek and laughter and rushed into the bathroom. The bath had obviously not been used for some time and a family of well-nourished roaches had built a nest in the drain. When the water gushed down the plughole, the poor cockroaches, fearing for their lives, climbed up the only safe place, my brother's legs. After brushing a handful of the rather large insects off his feet we both felt that this was a fitting ending to our visit to the Nizam. My sister-in-law did not find the incident quite so funny.

In February 1947 there was much strife and political unrest in India. After our return from Hyderabad we visited Madras briefly and then returned to our Bombay office for a few days. On February 28th we flew to New Delhi in order to catch the *Frontier Express*, the sleeper train to Lahore. Jean Duplant had made the arrangements and reserved three compartments. In first class the porters made up the beds, in second class one had to carry one's own bedding and third class slept on wooden seats. As on most public transport in India in the late forties the service was excellent. The white clad attendants wore stiff red turbans, pressed their palms together in a *namasta* greeting and wobbled their heads from side to side indicating both their assent and undivided attention. We had an undisturbed night and after waking in the morning I called for the obligatory morning tea and the porter to open the window shutters.

An incredible sight greeted me. There were hundreds of shouting people running along beside the train, carrying long lances and at many places there were the heads of decapitated people, impaled on lances, planted along the track. A riot had been brewing for some time and the Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims were killing each other with swords, knives and rifles. Fortunately the train did not stop and we arrived in Lahore without personal incident. The station was surrounded by police, the officers carrying *lahti* (bamboo sticks). To clear the streets and allow passengers to catch a local conveyance, the *lahti* were used indiscriminately to beat any person unlucky enough to get in the way. We were fortunate to obtain a two-wheeled *tonga* to take us to the hotel.

Reservations had been made for us at *Folettas*, what was then the leading hostelry. The riots had caused many disturbances and foreigners from everywhere nearby had rushed to Lahore to seek shelter from the chaos. Every room in the hotel was filled and arriving travelers, regardless of reservations, were put up wherever possible. We were assigned tents in the *Foletta Hotel* garden, thankfully surrounded by a sturdy wall with strong gates. The tents were of large size, similar to those seen in movies about the Arabian Desert. The bedsteads were also large and very comfortable. The tent flaps opened to let air circulate and were covered with mosquito netting. Very noticeable was the washstand with a porcelain bowl containing a jug of water and the toilet facility which was, to say the least, unusual. It consisted of a wooden 'throne'

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with a removable lid covering what was clearly an old fashioned chamber pot. I used the contraption shortly after arrival and, as soon as I had completed my business and was wondering what to do next, I felt the pot being whisked away and replaced by another. There was a rear opening to the 'throne' and there must have been a servant waiting behind every tent, ready to whip away the results of the guest's best efforts. Until not so long ago, all work in connection with human waste was carried out by the *untouchables* whose inherent cast condemned them forever to such sub-menial tasks.

The political situation made our hope for conducting negotiations with our Muslim clients in Lahore impossible. We concentrated on getting out of this tinderbox and back into the comparative safety of Bombay.

Unfortunately about ten thousand other people were thinking the same thing at the same time. Reservations to fly south on Air India were unobtainable and the *Frontier Mail*, the famous train to Bombay, was also fully booked. Henry and Joyce were finally able to secure two seats to Bombay on Air India, but Duplant and I were temporarily stuck.

The mood of the population was getting progressively nastier. I had visions of myself being run down by a hysterical mob. In their religious hatred for each other they no longer discriminated between natives and foreigners. To add to the excitement half the city had been set afire.

On the evening of 2nd March I was standing in the hotel bar ordering a *chota peg* (small) whisky commiserating with others about the lack of transport out of Lahore when one of the men remarked:

"It's a bloody shame you can't fly a plane. There are twelve planes out at the *drome* and we only have eleven pilots. We are trying to get them out of here before they burn down the lot."

"But I do fly airplanes," I replied. "I got my license way back in 1939 and unless it's a very complicated plane I should be able to take it down to Bombay. What type is it?"

"They are DH Doves and belong to the Lahore Flying Club and we propose to make a fuel stop in Ahmedabad and then down to the Juhu aerodrome. They are not all equipped for night flying so we propose to fly together and keep in sight of each other. We must get the planes out of here by tonight, tomorrow might be too late."

Half an hour later I had my few things packed, left Jean Duplant to his own devices and joined the other pilots and invited passengers. We drove to the aerodrome in lorries. Even at that late hour the city was wide awake with hordes running through the streets, chanting and shouting, setting fire to more and more buildings. We arrived at the airport without mishap and drove directly to the tie down area where the planes were in lines. The Dove was a simple pre-World War II de Havilland model that did not appear to require much expertise.

I was assigned VT Charlie Alpha Foxtrot and given position ten in the flight.



The plane did not have much in the way of instrumentation but I didn't have a lot of experience with instruments, so we fitted well. Weather conditions at that time of the year were usually good and, as agreed, we would fly in visual contact at all times. I checked out the plane and tried out the controls. All seemed quite straightforward and I did not expect to encounter any difficulties. Three passengers and a baby were assigned to my plane and we were handed sandwiches and two thermos flasks of tea to tide us over.

By then it was dark and despite the fires in the town departure had to wait for daylight. There was little to do until take-off so I dosed down on some rags in a hangar for a few hours. I was called to the plane around eight in the morning and we had several cups of vile coffee-like brew while we once more went over the details.

The lead plane would take-off and circle slowly. Then number two would take off, followed by the other planes until all were airborne. The leader would then speed up and assume the guide position. Number 12, second in command, would bring up the rear and watch out for stragglers, or in case one of us got lost.

This was not a military maneuver. It was the simplest way to get twelve planes from point A to point B with pilots unfamiliar with the territory and with an unfortunate lack of radios, instruments and local maps.

Take-off was at 0900 and shortly after we headed, like little ducks in a row, toward Ahmedabad. I had no difficulty in keeping the plane in front of me in line, but some trouble in maintaining the same altitude. All of us seemed to bounce up and down and were only a poor excuse for a straight line. My biggest problem was keeping the same distance from number 9. He seemed to speed up and, anxious not to lose him, I would speed up, only to find myself creeping up on him and having to quickly push in the stick throttle to slow down. After about fifteen minutes of that nonsense I started to rely more on the altimeter and maintained the height as instructed before the take-off. I also got slowly used to maintaining speed and after the first hour started to enjoy myself.

My co-pilot consisted of a French lady with a baby on her lap. She did not open her mouth to say one word the entire trip. However, her lips moved continuously and I could only assume that she was asking for divine guidance, which I was most happy to accept. The trip was uneventful and a few minutes before one o'clock I rolled to a stop alongside the other planes on the Ahmedabad airstrip. Fueling was in progress and pilots and passengers were standing together munching on sandwiches and trying to take advantage of the shade under the wings. The temperature was in the high forties and I for one was looking forward to getting back up in the air where it was pleasantly cool.

Before two o'clock we were once more aloft, mother and child now sitting behind me. My new partner up front was an elderly gentleman from Scotland. Over the noise of the engine he tried to tell me the story of his life and I could hardly have been less interested in what he was saying. Two hours later we were approaching Bombay. We had flown down the coast of the Gulf of

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Bombay, across the Portuguese colony of Damao and I saw the lead plane make a wide swing to the west while descending. Number 2 followed him in the same wide turn and about ten minutes later it was my turn. I leveled off for my approach from the sea and plunked VT-CAF down on the very rough strip, no worse than the pilot before me.

A number of taxis eventually took us from Juhu Beach to Bombay and I was happy to have survived the harrowing experience.

Spending much time in several parts of the country, I encountered many different types of food. Since a number of our associates were religious we followed the dietary laws of their particular religions. I became quite used to one day eating only vegetarian food, or food without any pork, when with my Muslim friends and the next meal, without beef, when with Hindus. Most of the country was 'dry'; that is, the government had placed a prohibition on drinking alcohol. Even as foreigners we had to sign a statement that we were alcoholics and could not exist comfortably without alcohol. That certificate entitled us to two bottles of scotch per month and about twelve bottles of beer. That same certificate automatically disqualified you from driving a car. At a party given by a young crowd of Indian movie moguls, I was introduced to some illegal spirits, distilled from the meat of snakes. All I can remember is that it was almost pure alcohol and had absolutely no taste. It did, however, have an enormous kick and I was fortunate that I only had a taste and did not follow the other young guests' example of asking for *borrah pegs* (doubles) and getting themselves completely smashed.

The wealth of a host was often displayed by the garnish on the dessert and I ate many decorated with gold rolled as thin as paper. The more garish the garnish, the wealthier the host.

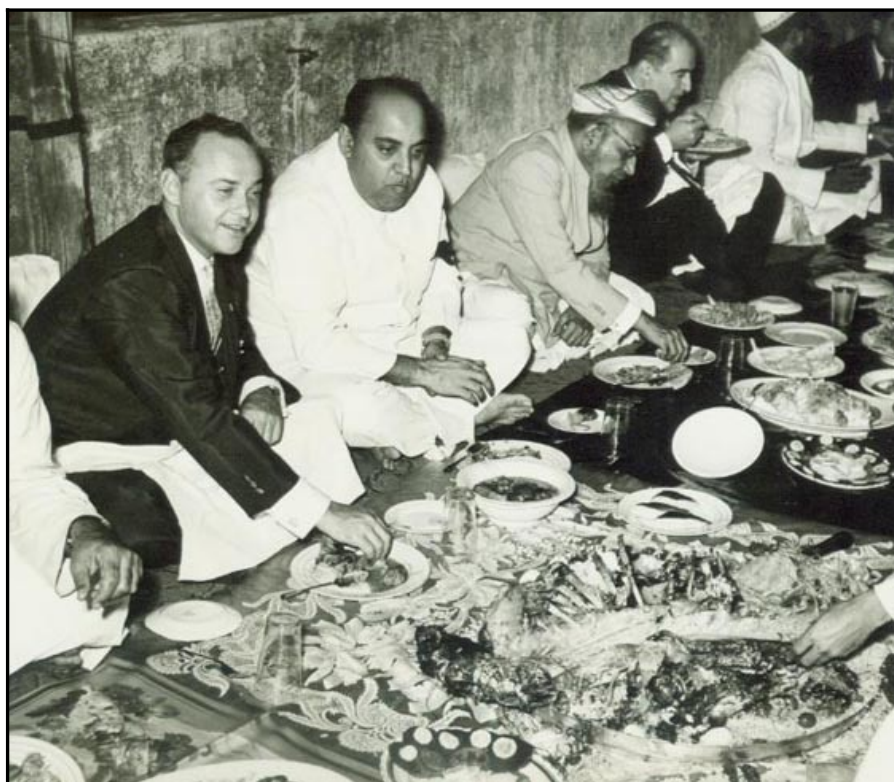
Prior to the days of refrigeration the taste of rotting food was camouflaged with spices. Today, the Indians still eat most foods heavily spiced. In restaurants serving mainly western dishes there were several strongly flavored soups such as mutton kidney soup and curried *mulligatawny*. *Becty*, a fish dish was standard fare in non-vegetarian restaurants as was chicken *alu*, curry and *paratha*. For meat eaters there were always tournedos, probably most of the time from water buffalo rather than beef and tenderized with certain fruits. Desserts included dishes made of yoghurt, semolina, carrots cooked for hours with sugar as well as many small sweets and various types of steamed and cooked fruit.

My brother requested two of our senior staff to meet us at the Bombay office. To introduce them to truly Indian food we arranged a dinner at a well-known restaurant. Henry asked the proprietor to make it "very hot". Dr. Joseph Costa and Reginald Morse, both Vice Presidents of the Von Kohorn parent organization in New York, ate with great relish. Their report the following morning was a claim that their stomachs had lit up when they turned out the light. To their surprise the digested food burned yet a second time when leaving the bodily orifice.

In this Indian atmosphere it did not take long for me to get used to being referred to as a *pukkah sahib* a designation often given to long time resident foreigners. I quickly adopted the Indian gestures of moving my head from side to side when agreeing with a statement and pressing my palms together while dipping my head when I greeted an Indian friend.

While making the round of potential investors in connection with financing our Indian Rayon Corporation and other projects, Jean Duplant had arranged a number of dinner parties for me to meet with rulers of former principalities. I had met with the Maharajas of Travancore, Mysore, Bangalore and others, and had easily learned to get used to and accept the unbelievable wealth that then still surrounded the previous heads of Indian states. They had fleets of private planes, numerous palaces, herds of working elephants, and thousands of laborers and workers.

Duplant had a previous personal contact with a minor ruler of a small emirate in the desert on the shores of the Persian Gulf. In those days oil had not been discovered under his piece of sand and the Ruler was extremely lucky to have pearl-growing oysters in the Gulf. The pearls were harvested by divers and collected for the Emir. The unfortunate holders of stolen pearls were liable to be summarily executed. The Emir personally took the raw pearls to an annual market for auction.



At that time the Emir of Qatar was a pauper compared to many Indian rulers. I was delighted when he and his very young son agreed to be my guests at a dinner party in one of the appropriate Bombay restaurants. There were various dishes of chicken and lamb but for religious reasons, no beef. Neither could we serve alcohol, but the sweets were, as mentioned before, very generously covered by the thinnest

layer of gold foil, to show respect for my guests.

Since the meal was served Indian style, we sat on the floor on carpets, with our legs crossed and without the benefit of cutlery. Each bite had to be rolled into a small ball-like gooey mess of rice, well saturated with the meat or vegetable gravy, and deftly transferred into ones mouth. To mark the occasion, a photographer had been employed to record the Emir's meal. Sorry to say, the

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Prince of Qatar never deigned to join some of the other past rulers investing in our Indian Rayon Corporation venture.

Around nineteen sixty Jean Duplant was appointed the Von Kohorn representative for India and Pakistan. Later my brother Henry made him a Vice President of Von Kohorn Eastern Corporation and he was elected to the Board of some of our clients' companies. His wife, an Anglo-Indian had made their acceptance into the "European" society in India difficult. His life became only fully integrated when she finally emigrated to Lausanne in Switzerland. Jean proved to be a loyal and always reliable member of the Von Kohorn organization and often was called on to attend corporate sales meetings and gatherings in New York, London, Paris, Darmstadt and Alexandria.

The last time I saw Jean was in 1983 when I introduced him to Jill on our visit to Bombay and we lunched on his favorite Mulligatawny soup at the restaurant in the Taj Mahal Hotel.

## A SAIL TO JUHU BEACH

It was only a five-minute walk across the square from our office in the *Taj Mahal Hotel* to the *Royal Bombay Yacht Club*. Despite that, under no circumstances would the uniformed hotel doorman let me walk. Very ceremoniously he placed his police whistle in his mouth and let out a shrill blast. His carefully folded and starched turban and military stance showed his former association with the army. When the bedraggled horse-drawn two-wheeled *tonga* pulled up, he smartly opened the low door, accepted his *bhakshish*, and while the left hand closed the door he saluted with his open palm. His fingers moved rapidly up and down, imitating a graduate of the top English military establishment.

"Rrrroyal Bombay Yacht Club for the Sahib," came his instructions to the *tonga* driver, for my benefit in English, and then rapidly repeated three or four times in Urdu.

It had been explained to me that in the bygone days of the British Empire all teachers sent to India came from Wales. The result was a continent of Welsh-accented Indians. A good story but I cannot prove its veracity.

"The driver will take you there, Sahib," was the doorman's reassuring pronouncement while his head oscillated right and left. "I wish you a pleasant morning." The driver cracked his whip and touched its tip to the horse that pulled away from the curb and headed down the street towards the club. To our right was the enormous *Gateway of India*, erected at the time when King George V and Queen Mary visited India as Emperor and Empress.

Across the square and we were in front of the club. While I handed the driver the few annas for the short ride, a uniformed and turbaned *lascar* opened the door and saluted smartly.

"Welcome, Sahib. Welcome."

I tipped two fingers to my forehead and was rewarded by an even more rigid salute, probably occasioned by the erroneous belief that I might be a military sahib in mufti.

Once through the doors and in the club I passed through the lines of cabinets holding magnificent trophies presented through the years by benevolent viceroys, maharajas and leading citizens. Enormous silver monstrosities, tankards, salvers and cups lined the walls as I made my way to the bar and billiard room. Several peons were dressed in the uniform of naval ratings but all wearing identical turbans with a silver cockade that I had already observed on the doorman's turban.

My host was waiting for me in the bar. Dressed in gray 'bags' with an open white shirt and a silken cravat, he was the epitome of the well-dressed yachtsman. His blazer, with the club's royal insignia on the breast pocket, was thrown over a seat and he had parked himself beneath one of the *punkhas*, which slowly creaked back and forth and stirred up the air a little.

"I say, old boy. Good to see you. You will have a quick drink, won't you? Bearer! Whisky and water for the Sahib."

"Thank you for inviting me. I am really looking forward to the sail. When do we expect to return? I would like to leave word with the hotel."

"That is easily done, old chap. Bearer, bring a chitty for the Sahib and tell a peon to take it across to the hotel."

Beautiful yacht club stationery was produced together with an inkwell and a nib pen. I quickly wrote a note telling the porter of the hotel that I would be back for supper and sent it off with the servant.

This being mid-week there were only a few members in the club and when we walked down to the jetty no other boats were going out. The *Royal Bombay Yacht Club* raced every weekend and there were quite a few dragons, some seabirds and a Dutch class called stordraken moored offshore. My host owned a small cruising yacht that had been built in Bombay and was just under ten meters in length.

The *serang* was waiting in the club launch and sculled us to my host's mooring where "*Kismet*" lay covered by a tarpaulin stretched over her boom. On coming alongside I got ready to step aboard and help to prepare the boat.

"Oh, do sit down. The *serang* will do all that. Can't have a sahib doing that kind of work."

I did not know whether he was kidding or serious, but slunk down ignominiously. The *serang* quickly untied the straps, readied the sails, hoisted the club burgee with the crown in the upper canton, unfurled the defaced blue ensign and placed the flagpole in the stern fitting. My host puffed at a cigarette and quite pointedly talked facing me to avoid even a glance at the work going on at his elbow. When all was done the *serang* came back aboard the launch.

"Sahib, the boat is all ready. You will have a good sail," and his head



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tilted from one side to the other.

"Ek dum tik hai," Chuck replied. Roughly translated, it meant "Absolutely top hole, my man." I was appropriately impressed with Chuck's fluency in Hindustani. Then came another smart salute, we stepped aboard "*Kismet*" and the *serang* pulled himself to the bow to drop the mooring line.

Charles Henry Grenville was a young textile engineer from Manchester who had not long arrived from England to work for a few years in India. Our agent had introduced us. He belonged to one of the better sailing clubs in Lancashire and had arrived in Bombay with a letter of introduction to RBYC. Shortly after joining the club he had bought "*Kismet*" from a club member who was returning home. He admitted that he was still fairly inexperienced with the boat and the Bombay coast. He had, however, learned how to handle Indian staff and now explained his behavior to me.

"You must never do any of those chap's work. They are very proud of the way they look after the boats. If you do the work instead of them they think that you don't trust their ability to do things right. So I let them be and if it's wrong I fix it after I have left the mooring."

I accepted his philosophy and asked what I could do to assist. I carried a small satchel with sandshoes and a jersey and had brought along a bottle of whisky for my host. When I presented the bottle to Chuck he pulled two small glasses out from under a seat.

"Don't carry any water. We'll have to make do with drinking it neat."

We each had a drink and then concentrated on sailing. "*Kismet*" was basically an open boat with only a bit of a dodger. Her tiller was beautifully shaped and extended about two meters into the cockpit. The mainsail was heavy cotton dyed a reddish brown and the small jib was of a much lighter white fabric. We sat comfortably with the sun beating down on us. Rummaging under the seat, Chuck produced two beaten up old *topis* and tossed one to me.

"Better wear that. Can't be too careful of the sun, eh what! Can't have you getting sunstroke out here."

He was right of course. There was no shade on the boat and within an hour this heat could do quite some damage to the skin and particularly my unprotected head.

We passed out of the boat harbor and headed south along the seawall sailing parallel to Strand Road that ran alongside the *Gateway* and the *Taj Mahal Hotel*. We were not far offshore and never lost sight of the masses of people that at all times and everywhere represent the true picture of India. Most were dressed in *dhotis*, the men wearing their *Ghandi* caps. People everywhere standing still, moving slowly, walking, or lying on the breakwater. Everywhere there were mangy looking pariah dogs. A few *dhoti-wallahs* were wading in the water doing their customers' washing in the sea.

Chuck brought "*Kismet*" fairly close to shore and pointed out the sights to me. I

was only a recent visitor to India and all this was exciting and new since the few hours I spent in Bombay about eleven years before had given me little chance to look at the city from the sea.

As the day wore on a haze increasingly obscured the sun. There was some relief from the heat although the humidity stayed high. I suggested that we could sail to Juhu Beach and see a little of Bombay from that side.

Chuck was talking a lot about his girlfriend, whom he had met at the time he bought "*Kismet*" and described her as having a bit of native blood. 'Four annas to the rupee.' It took me a while to figure out that she must be one quarter Indian since there were sixteen annas to the rupee.

The Anglo-Indian ladies I had met were mostly tall and slim and I found them particularly charming. Chuck's main peeve came from the fact that when invited to social occasions his lady friend was never included. The stuffy atmosphere, which then still permeated the post-war English pseudo-society, was changing rapidly after independence and partition.

Before long we passed the Sasoon Docks and were heading for Prong Island. A lighthouse protected shipping from this dangerous rocky tip of Bombay. The coast was full of boulders and Chuck stayed about a mile off-shore. Having rounded Colaba Point and safely passed the rocks, he headed straight across Back Bay for Malabar Point. This was where Government House was located with its incredible view looking out across the Arabian Sea.

Once we had rounded Colaba it was barely three miles to Malabar. The panorama of the whole Marine Drive lay to starboard. Apartment buildings and hotels, all the same height lined up like targets in a shooting gallery. Two miles off we could see Chowpatty and the curve of Malabar Hills. This is the place where the Parsee population of Bombay erected the famous Towers of Silence, where their dead are placed to be eaten by vultures and the bones dissolved in acid.

Their religion does not allow the corpse to be touched by earth, fire or water. The body is arranged on the tower and the vultures dispose of it. The bones are then collected and dissolved.

We had now covered about half the distance to our destination at Juhu Beach and after rounding Malabar Point headed north along the coast.

Beach Candy Baths, then still a holdout for European Only membership, and the adjoining Beach Candy Hospital looked down on us from the shoreline. Soon we passed the ancient Muslim tomb of Jaji Ali, cheek by jowl with the Hindu temple Mahalakshmi. From here on the view changed and we were looking mostly at industrial buildings. The fort at the end of Worli Peninsula is the beginning of Mahim Bay and the very end of Bombay Island. It was only a mile across until we reached the very end, Bandra Point, the actual mainland and eight miles to our destination. We were proceeding at an average speed of six and a half miles per hour and expected to reach Juhu about three o'clock.

When we passed the Juhu civilian airport I looked for familiar landmarks and in

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particular the runway. This was where only a few days before I had set down the De Haviland Dove on its rather poorly kept surface and Chuck was intrigued with the story I had to tell about my flight.

"You were really lucky to get out of Lahore," said Chuck. "The riots haven't stopped and thousands have been killed so far."

"Now that we are here, let's go ashore before we sail back," I suggested.

"There is no place we can get close in. We could drop anchor and swim ashore, but that is too much like hard work. I suggest we turn around and head for home."

Chuck was obviously right and so we turned for the run back. It was early afternoon and I felt decidedly hungry.

"Is there any place around here where we can stop and buy some food?" I asked.

"Where do you think you are?" replied Chuck. "Usually we take a hamper along, but I didn't think we'd be out this long. There is no place I know that sells food along the shore and I don't know of a place where you can get close enough without running aground."

We both had another whisky and were lying back comfortably in the pleasant afternoon sun.

"Now I must tell you the story of *"Kismet"* and Nadja," Chuck started. "When I arrived in Bombay I applied and was accepted as a member of the RBYC. I immediately started looking for a boat and met a club member who was soon to return home after three years with his firm's Bombay office."

While discussing the sale of *"Kismet"* the conversation came around to his need to also dispose of his Bombay flat. He suggested that I might take a look at it and, if interested, take over the lease and the furniture. He promised to make a fair deal, to settle everything quickly and even offered that I pay off some of it over the next year. I liked that idea and within a few days made up my mind to accept and we closed the deal.

Chuck stretched out, reached for the bottle and we each had another small drink. "Now you'll never believe this," he said, "but the deal took on a third dimension. One evening when I was looking over the flat, I was introduced to his girlfriend. She was Anglo-Indian and so was her mother. We talked about how sad Nadja would be after her boy friend's return to England. Naturally I promised I'd look after her and keep her company."

I gave a wry smile to myself remembering my own escapade in Japan. Quite obviously Chuck had made the deal of his life and was delighted to talk about having acquired a boat, a flat and a beautiful girl friend, all at the same time.

"You should have bought a ticket in the Irish Sweeps," I interrupted. "With that much luck you would have won the first prize too." Chuck laughed.

"That's not the end of it. It gets even better. Nadja's father came out from

England about fifty years ago and worked as the manager of an Assam tea company. He was lucky and eventually owned his own plantation. He married a local girl, many years younger, whose father had been an English planter and her mother an Indian. He returned home on a trip where he suddenly died. His wife, when she heard the news, left Assam and moved to Bombay. He had left her quite a bit of money and she had been worth 'lakhs of rupees'. Nadja is her daughter, very westernized, a barrel of laughs and a wonderful girl. Her mother died, not long ago, and left all that money to her. She is totally independent. She likes me, I like her and we are having a wonderful time together."

By now it was late in the afternoon and, since we were sailing generally south, the setting sun was pouring over the starboard side. We passed the ugly industrial area coming up to Malabar Point. If the light wind continued, we would be back at the club by seven o'clock.

I felt very obliged to Chuck for the wonderful afternoon's sail and wanted to reciprocate his hospitality at the earliest opportunity. From several remarks he had made during our talk about the stuffy English attitude towards Anglo-Indians I thought it would be a particularly fitting suggestion if I invited Chuck and Nadja to dine with me.

"If you have no special plans for this evening, would you like to get in touch with Nadja and have dinner at the Taj," I suggested. "We can get back, change and meet at nine."

"We have nothing on for tonight. Nadja will be waiting at the club when we get back and we would love to accept your invitation."

That settled we concentrated on sailing and finally entered the club anchorage where it was a simple matter of picking up the float and making fast. From under the seat Chuck produced a rusty old horn, which he blew lustily, and in a moment the club launch was sculled out to collect us. We didn't have to wait for *Kismet* to be put under her tarpaulin and the sails stowed, that was all handled by the *serang* after we had been deposited back at the jetty.

As we walked up to the clubhouse Chuck pointed to the verandah.

"There is Nadja now."

Nadja was tall, slim, and beautiful. Although only twenty five percent Indian, she was dressed in a lovely sari and wore the red beauty mark on her forehead. After introductions had been made, Chuck explained about my invitation and we left together. Nadja was driving an open racing-green Riley and they dropped me off at the hotel.

The evening turned out to be most enjoyable. This was still during the days of formality and graciousness and I was dressed in my white dinner jacket, then standard uniform for supper in the hotel. I proceeded to pre-order our meal with the help of the *maître d'hôtel*. This being before prohibition, I had the appropriate wine set aside.

Nadja, in deference to Chuck and me, wore a stunning white evening dress with

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her hair done in the latest European fashion. When I bowed to her very formally, she pressed her hands together in front of her face in the ancient Indian posture of *namaste*, lowered her head in a demure greeting, but wore the most wicked smile I had seen in a long time. I was sorry business took me away from Bombay a few days later.

Six months after this pleasant interlude India's independence was declared on 14 August 1947. At the stroke of midnight a policeman nailed a 'closed' sign across the entrance portal of the club that had stood for decades as a symbol of the white raj's power. It later became a mess for the cadets of the new Indian navy and only much later moved to new quarters across the street where it once again became a yacht club.

## CHINA

In early 1947 Tom Evans, who headed our China office, requested that I visit China to negotiate a contract with Aloud Spinning Mill. I left Calcutta's Dum Dum airport on 26 March 1947 on CNAC flight 602. China National Airways Corporation was the product of former U. S. Air Force, General Chenault's airline, the Flying Tigers. The only previous linkage from India had been via the Burma Road. The General's airline now made air connection to Shanghai possible. The equipment used was an old DC4, registered in China and bearing registration number XT-CNC.

The first sector of our flight was to Kunming, 1677 kilometers nor-east, which we covered in five hours seventeen minutes. The flight crossed over Assam and Burma to the Yunan province. We had taken off thirty minutes past midnight in pouring rain and landed at our first stop in the morning. Breakfast was served in a U. S. Air Force hangar, while the plane was refueled. We reboarded, left at seven a.m. and headed north for Chungking in the Szechwan province, arriving at half past one. Lunch was again served in a former hanger while our plane was refueled. During the flight we were offered sandwiches, tea, coffee or beer. The flight attendants were smartly uniformed Chinese girls who looked after us beautifully. The strange routing was the result of certain areas being prohibited to aircraft and this added over two thousand kilometers to the journey.

The next sector was to Hong Kong. We had left at two p.m. and arrived at five in the afternoon, a distance of 1210 kilometers and the shortest hop of the Calcutta\Shanghai flight. I decided to stay for a day and went directly to the *Peninsula Hotel* reserved almost exclusively for high-ranking military personnel. I hoped that they would remember my name from the previous visits of members of the family. Luck was with me; I was assigned a room and ten minutes later luxuriated in a hot bath after which I dined at *Gaddi's*, the hotel's famous restaurant. I telegraphed our office in Shanghai advising them of my flight and arrival time. I was very much looking forward to again meeting with



Tom Evans, our local manager, whom I had last seen in 1936 when I was en route from Switzerland to Japan.



I left Hong Kong on 28 March at nine in the morning, again on a DC4, and arrived in Shanghai at half past one. Tom was waiting for me on the tarmac having talked his way past the guards and, shortly after, his chauffeur delivered us to the *Park Hotel* on the Bund. Our office was nearby at 34 Museum Road, and arrangements had been made for me to meet with our client the following day.

China was in the midst of unbelievable inflation. Tom warned me not to change one single dollar. To tide me over he handed me

several bundles of Chinese currency. Each bundle, containing fifty thousand yuan, was tied together with a cord and the knots secured with red sealing wax. The currency was falling rapidly and the exchange rate could double between the morning and evening quotations. During my stay I gave a party for our client and his family and reservations had been made at the *Golden Phoenix* restaurant. We had to pay fifty percent of the estimated total bill in the morning to allow the restaurant to purchase the food items. The rest was to be paid the next morning when the latest exchange rate had been struck. I remember the chauffeur delivering to the restaurant over thirty bundles of fifty thousand yuan each. The party was for ten with the finest food and several bottles of rice wine. The cost came to less than twenty-five U.S. dollars!

When we arrived at the venerable dining establishment I learned the meaning of *kowtow*. The proprietor bowed over and over again, the bundles of money spoke a universal language.

I had noticed that Chinese added a red stamp to their signatures. The stamps were mostly made of ivory or horn, with the owner's name engraved on one end. They were dipped into a small pouch containing a thick red ink-like substance. The stamp, called a 'chop' was then pressed to the paper and took the place of a signature. Since the 'chops' were hand engraved and distinctive, they were as good as a personal signature and a forgery easily discernable. I was of course convinced that I could not work another day without applying my personal 'chop' to every piece of paper I signed. I asked Tom whether he could arrange to have a chop engraved for me. He consulted a particularly learned acquaintance to select the most appropriate lucky Chinese characters and ones that could be read by a majority of people. Their sounds in Mandarin were selected to come as close as possible to 'von Kohorn'. I was told that the finally engraved chop read Fon Koh Hon. Close enough to von Kohorn to satisfy me.

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One day, as we were driving to our client's factory, soldiers who had cordoned off the street stopped our car. We were ordered to step out and the driver, Tom Evans and I were unceremoniously herded into a holding area and confronted by several doctors and nurses. A large number of plague cases had been diagnosed in Shanghai and an order given to inoculate the entire population. A line of soldiers proceeded slowly from one side of the city to the other and every person was injected, painfully, on the spot. The little finger was then dipped into dye to identify those who had passed through the line. The disease had caused many hundreds of deaths and vaccination of the city's entire population was the only thing that could halt the spread. The rat population had multiplied during the war and an eradication program was under way. It was all over in moments; the medical team kowtowed to us, we kowtowed to the medical team and were then permitted to continue on our way.

Tom insisted on taking me to a bathhouse located conveniently on Nanking Road. It had been established about thirty years previously and had survived the recent war. Named *Yu De Chi*, it was the foremost bathhouse of Shanghai. There may also have been other divertissements but we went there for a bath, a scrub and a rub down. Soaking in a deep tub we slowly turned a nice red color, thus cooked almost to a turn. Then we were shown to massage tables and a pair of hulking great men proceeded to pummel and knead us until I felt like a piece of chopped meat. I had never felt as clean before.

In Shanghai I successfully negotiated a contract for the supply of a considerable amount of equipment to the *Aloud Spinning Mills* from our Japanese licensees. During the Easter holidays Tom and I went to a nearby resort. We took the train and, passing through suburbs, arrived at Sun Moon Lake in the afternoon. This was the time when the cherry blossoms were in bloom. Near the small township is the famous needle pagoda. Needle, because several roofs of the multi storied pagoda had collapsed, retaining only the center column, sticking like a needle into the air. The village had two lakes, connected by a moon bridge, the lakeshores covered by many houses. These were private residences predating the communist era. At the time of our visit they were mostly the homes of highly paid courtesans of rich Shanghai businessmen.

Below the village, the *Yang-Tse-Kiang* (Yellow River) wound its way to the sea. Peaceful and quiet, it was one of the nicest resorts near to Shanghai and was visited by wealthy Chinese and foreigners alike for many years. I finally left China for the Philippines on 24 May 1947.

## POSTWAR JAPAN

After the end of the Second World War we re-established our offices in Japan in Osaka. Tokyo was so crowded with American military personnel that offices and housing for our staff were difficult to obtain. Kobe born Bob Schnell was employed to head the administrative part of our operations. He was a former

colleague of ours from the Military Language School. Bob was fluent in Japanese and was supported by technical staff from many parts of the world. Masanori (Ted) Semoto, a Japanese; Jaroslaus Walouch, a Czech; Jim Goodzeit, our American director of purchases, were just a few of the different nationalities.

Our building had the first combined male and female toilets I had ever seen and became, invariably, a place of 'must see' for the many foreigners that passed through our office. These were not unisex toilets. They were combined toilets with one wall of urinals used by the men, while the women walked behind them to get to the cubicles. These cubicles had short doors, with the guys and gals sitting side by side. I never got used to this 'sharing'.

As a civilian in the late forties and early fifties it almost needed a special military permit from General MacArthur's office to fly within Japan. We often had to travel between Tokyo and Osaka and used the night sleeper train. It was surprisingly comfortable and the service left nothing to be desired. Later DC3 and DC4's were used; today there are jets and ultra-rapid bullet trains.

Our first Japanese associates were Kotobuki Saisaksho, with its machine shops in Kyoto. Later, one of Japan's leading manufacturers, Mitsubishi Shipbuilding Company Limited of Shimonoseki, manufactured miscellaneous machinery under our license. Our third associate was Toshiba Electrical Company of Tokyo, which built various types of electrical equipment to our specifications.

My travels to Osaka became so frequent that I found it convenient to have a small cabinet placed in our office where I kept two suits and some shirts. It saved packing and after my departure the suits were pressed and the shirts laundered ready for the next arrival. I did the same in London and Bombay and it resulted in a considerable reduction in my luggage.

There were rapid changes in Japan, and Tokyo in particular. My Japan of the mid thirties no longer existed. The changes of the past ten years were nothing compared to those that took place from the mid forties. Tokyo became hyper-modern: both the city and the people. While there were still women who wore *tabis*, (the Japanese split toe slip-on sock) with *zori*, or high wooden *getas*, these were mostly replaced by western style footwear. The silk *kimonos* had given way to those made of nylon or polyester and the oiled paper black edged *yakko ja-nome* supplanted by modern metal-ribbed, self-opening polyamide umbrellas.

Every time a member of the Von Kohorn organization arrived in Japan for the first time they asked to be taken to see *sumo* wrestling. When a *Sumo* festival was on, we were only too glad to oblige. With our little knowledge we tried to explain the art of *sumo*. The sport as it's known today dates back hundreds of years and top *sumo* athletes are revered, almost as walking gods. We passed on our knowledge of the selection of young men, the endless years of training, the carefully maintained diet, the importance of the long hair and topknot. When we went to attend one of the ceremonies, sitting close to the sand-covered raised circular ring, we were as excited as the thousands of spectators

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around us. The object is to force any part of your opponent outside the ring or cause any part of his body, other than the feet, to touch the ground. The colorful ceremony prior to each bout is always entertaining. It consisted of throwing salt on the clay and sand to make the ring, in the event of a wrestler being killed, sacred. Then there was clapping of hands to wake up the gods and protect the protagonists, followed by stomping of feet to drive away the devils.

Occasionally we were lucky enough to watch a grand champion fight, some winning in mere seconds. The bouts never lasted more than a minute. They were monsters of men, dressed only in their heavy silk loincloths called the *mawashi*. Watching them raise a leg high in the air and then stomp down making the surrounding area shake was always a fantastic sight; no matter how often one had previously watched the wrestlers in action.

Many of our visitors asked to be taken to a Japanese *Noh*, performance. Difficult to understand without a good knowledge of Japanese, it is a type of opera with its own peculiarities. Scene changes are made on the open stage with the stagehands dressed in black hooded smocks that were supposed to make them invisible. Similarly, some costume changes are made by a type of sleight of hand resulting, for example, in the miraculous change of an actor emerging as an animal after having appeared as a human. A young male actor, after some clever change of costume, would suddenly turn into a court lady, a ghost or a decrepit old man. Strange singing, accompanied by a stringed instrument called a *samisen* is part of the *Noh* opera. An opera can last from eleven in the morning until five in the afternoon without a break. Parents, mothers suckling their babies, whole families, enthralled by this combination of acting, singing, magic and athletic feats make up the audience. As departing members of the audience vacated seats, spectators waiting patiently in line filled them.

In Tokyo, at times, something called a Dutch auction was held in the middle of the day. Buyers dropped a written offer showing the amount and name of the bidder into a sealed container placed before the item entered in the auction. The items would remain on show for two or three days and all bids had to be in the container by a fixed time, usually at noon, and the bidders present at the opening. The auctioneers quickly eliminated the lower bids and selected the successful bidder in just moments. The items were then handed over, the bidden amount paid and the artifacts proudly carried away. Dad attended these auctions from time to time and built up a fine collection of Chinese and Japanese antiques. His friend and advisor was Emil Baerwald, the head of the German I G Farben Industrie operations in Japan. Coincidentally his daughter and I had been in the same class at the American School in Japan in the mid 1930's.

## AUSTRIA AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Towards the end of the forties we were negotiating with companies in Austria and Czechoslovakia. In the beginning it was necessary to find a central point from where it was easy to reach other parts of occupied Europe. One of the hubs for flights was Frankfurt am Main, with its enormous air base. Although sequestered by the U.S. Army we were given permission to stay at the *Frankfurter Hof*. We were also authorized to use General Keyes' personal plane, an Air Transport Command DC4, No.37049, to fly to Berlin, where we stayed four days to negotiate clearances.

Post war Berlin was controlled by the four powers, a city surrounded by Russian occupied land. There only access was by air or through a single road.

After completing our work in Berlin, on 3 July 1947 we flew to Hamburg in a Royal Airforce Viking. Hamburg was located in the then English occupied sector. We had been supplied with an address and finally located Franz Sixthor who was, before the war, head of our drafting design offices in Chemnitz and Halle. Dad made arrangements to have him later brought to New York to again head our drafting department. When we walked into his below street level apartment, he was lying on a cot, totally undernourished and recuperating from the effects of the bombing of Hamburg.

From Hamburg we went to Stockholm. Being large consumers of cellulose, used to manufacture rayon, we decided to call in person on one of Europe's largest manufacturers of Cellulose. Norköpping exported its output all over the world so we visited them to assure the suitability of their product. At the airport we met with one of their senior executives and were taken to the Royal Swedish Automobile Club, adjoining the *Grand Hotel*. The RSAC had rooms for members to use when visiting Stockholm and an impressive suite of two bedrooms with a connecting living room was assigned to us. We were taken on a boat tour to a number of small islands and the following day to the Norköpping pulp factory and thence back to Stockholm.

In mid-July 1947 I had finished my work in Scandinavia and decided to take a few days off and fly to the Riviera. I arrived on the twenty-third in Nice and checked in at the *Hotel Negresco*. I had a small suite overlooking the beach and relaxed with the picturesquely uniformed staff outdoing each other to make my stay memorable. The apartment was furnished in antiques with brocaded fabrics, matching drapes and an Aubusson on the floor. Max Blouet, manager of the *George Cinq* in Paris, had contacted Paul Augier, his counterpart at the *Negresco*, and I received the royal treatment.

Three days later I ran into friends from New York who were staying at the *Carlton Hotel* in Cannes. I decided to move and was fortunate to obtain an air-



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conditioned apartment. My friends and I wanted to return to London at the same time. We stayed until the first of August and flew together. At the height of the holiday season flights were difficult to obtain. There is a small airport for private planes near Cannes and I drove there to see what could be done. After some negotiating I was able to obtain three seats on an English Ciro Charter Company DC3 that was returning empty to Gatwick. The non-stop flight of over eleven hundred kilometers took four hours and was in sumptuous surroundings with a uniformed steward plying us with drinks and *hors d'oeuvres*. A stately limousine awaited us at Gatwick airport and took us to *Grosvenor House* in Park Lane, all part of the service.

In January 1948 my parents decided that they wanted to spend some time in Vienna. They shipped their dark blue Cadillac limousine with their New York license plate number BK 100 to Europe. They hired Leopold Hotwagner, a local chauffeur, and took up residence in the Hotel Astoria on the Kärntnerstrasse.



For our negotiations with the clients in Czechoslovakia Dad called for his multilingual niece Dorli Winterova, who looked after our London office. She was quickly installed in the Astoria Hotel to assist in our office in Vienna and helped with the Czech language problem. I had a wonderful time traveling with her in Dad's American licensed Cadillac

limousine to Bratislava.

With dozens of friends and hundreds of acquaintances, life in post World War II Vienna was busy. A string of parties, a succession of bridge games, visits to favorite restaurants, short trips to neighboring towns and across the border to nearby countries.

Friends from Vally's former operatic career made sure that my parents attended operas, operettas, concerts and plays. As well, they patronized parties and functions, where stars of the day were introduced to society and were expected to perform for their supper. Oscar and Vally loved to entertain and living in a hotel, could do so to their hearts' content, giving parties in the many restaurants, which had their renaissance in the new Vienna arising from the bombings.

When the grapes were picked, it was time for the *Heurigen*, the month when special establishments showed, by means of green branches tied over the entrance door, that they served the fresh, still unfermented grape wine. Most of these restaurants were away from the center of the city, in outer districts, such

as Gumpoldskirchen, Grinzing or Neudorf. The obligatory food served at these functions was *Backhendel*, *Bratwurst* and in all places the ubiquitous Hungarian *Gulasch*. The *Heurigen* was served in glasses or pitchers and *Salzstangerln* (saltsticks) were available on the tables to create and maintain a constant thirst. Dad usually reserved one of the restaurant's large booths, seating up to twenty people around a huge table. Their guests would arrive and be steered to our table, where pitchers of wine were already waiting.

In the eighties a 'blush' wine spelt Zinfandel became the latest rage in the USA. It took me a while to connect it with the wine we used to drink at the *Heurigen* named in good Austrian dialect 'Zierfandl'. I guess the American tongue could not quite wrap itself around the Austrian 'dl'.

Among their close friends was Hubert Marischka with his second wife and his first wife Lillian, now married to Martin Figueroa, the Chilean Ambassador to Austria. There was also Dr. Franz Landertshammer, director general of the Länderbank and Dr. Robert Harmer, his counterpart of the Kreditanstalt, the two leading Austrian government controlled banks.

Count Assene Harthenau of the Austrian Ministry of Finance and Dr. Haiböck of the Postal Ministry, with their wives, were friends that often joined the parents' parties. Gustav Rieger Freiherr von Hohenasperg, an elderly bachelor, was mother's regular bridge partner. Gustav, although an illegitimate child, was accepted by the Viennese society, since his father had been the son of the Austrian Emperor. His unmarried mother was one of the court's ladies. She had been granted the title of baroness by the emperor, a title that would die out with Gustav's death.

Several of my parent's favorite shops and tradesmen were in Vienna. Dad and I used the House of Knize as our tailors in New York. It was very convenient to have the same craftsmen build our suits from the same measurements in their Austrian shops on the Graben in Vienna or in Bad Gastein. Our shirts were made by Braun, but that establishment was more my mother's affair since they also supplied the family with all linen and fabric requirements. Mother's jewelers were Fischmeister und Rozet who also provided our personal engraved stationery. Many years previously they had cut and etched the family crest in heavy metal dies used for embossing and printing, which providentially had survived the war.

My mother was kept busy with her many girlfriends and there were regular bridge afternoons at the ladies' different homes. It usually consisted of four tables and the sixteen met for a formal luncheon followed by several hours of solid card playing, with all concentrating on the game and very little general conversation. One day when my visit to Vienna coincided with Mutti's weekly bridge party, the hostess had invited me to join the group for lunch. In those days I was still a very heavy smoker and firmly believed that unless I had a cigarette during meals after every course I would surely die. I arrived shortly before we all sat down for lunch at the huge dining room table. Our host, the Countess Assene von Harthenau presided over the guests, lining the sides of

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the long table. As the only male, and of course considered a mere child of only twenty-nine among the elderly ladies, I had been seated at the very end of the table. The first course was a cream soup. Being on my best behavior I was very careful to scoop up the soup by moving the spoon away from me and then tipping it to sip the soup from its side, and not to place the spoon into my mouth. I looked around and once I saw that all ladies had put down their soup spoon, I reached into my pocket brought out my cigarettes and lighter. Smiling charmingly at the hostess about ten meters away at the other end of the table, I motioned to the pack of fags I was clutching in my hand and prepared to light up. The very stern voice of the Countess slashed down the table at me.

“Baron Ralph. If you have to smoke, you may leave the table.”

I had to smoke and to my poor mother's absolute disgust I got up, left the room and once outside lit up and had a delicious deep drag on my cigarette. It did give the old biddies something to talk about for the next week.

In mid-summer my parents usually moved from Vienna to Bad Gastein in the province of Salzburg. There they rented an apartment in the *Hotel Europa*, had their early morning walks in the mountains, hot curative baths, massages and other vitalizing and beneficial pampering of the bodies and senses. Being an old and longtime visitor to the spa, my father was approached by the *Evangelische Gemeinde* advising that the church, which my parents regularly visited, desperately needed repairs. Dad felt privileged to assist our old friend, pastor Lebouton. Today a painted dedication on the entrance wall of the *Bad Gasteiner Lutherische Kirche* records his name as a benefactor of the church's reconstruction. My mother loved to have friends visit her at Bad Gastein. Vera Schwarz, the famous Viennese opera star and former stage partner of Richard Tauber came every year and stayed as mother's guest at the Hotel. So did Dad's cousin Viscomtess Olga de Cognets des Kerdreoret from Paris, who arrived invariably with her tiny lapdog in her large handbag. I remember her strange supervision of the little dog, which like most dogs, liked to sniff the backside of other dogs. As long as it sniffed at girl dogs, she took no notice, but when it approached another boy dog, out would come the daily newspaper, she regularly carried, and she would give her pooch a whack across its rump and call in a voice full of disgust: *paederast*. I wondered at the time whether there was such a thing.



After the summer holiday period the chauffeur would take mother in her car to Montecatini in northern Italy. I once went along for the drive. Just outside Bad Gastein was the railway station where cars were loaded on the train that took them and their passengers through the long tunnel to Mallnitz on the southern side of the Hohen Tauern. These gigantic mountains are on the border between Austria and Italy. From there, the road dropped down and after passing through Bolzano and Trento we stopped at Verona overnight after which the road connected with the *autostrada* at Modena. Much of the highway between Bologna and Firenze was still under construction but then came a short thirty kilometer run to Terme, the spa near Montecatini. Mother regularly stayed at the *Grand Hotel Nizza* that offered a continuation of the tough health *regime* she underwent regularly. Terme's waters were hotter and contained different minerals than those at Bad Gastein or Karlsbad.

The international guests were much the same, subjugating themselves to light exercise, strict diets, long walks and getting together for lengthy discussions about their ailments and lively bridge sessions every afternoon. After leaving mother I continued on to Rome in our car and the following day took a plane out to Cairo to meet Oscar.

## PALESTINE

Our company's industrial intelligence learned that an attempt was under way to erect a rayon plant in Palestine. Having just completed arrangements for a



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similar factory in Egypt, we were anxious to expand our own investments into other countries in the Middle East. The project we had heard about was to be carried out by the Industrial Rayon Corporation, an American company. Since speed was of the essence, I was asked in February 1948 to immediately proceed to Palestine to negotiate with a group that could be both potential partners and clients. Our company had been put in touch with a possible investor, an owner of a large citrus plantation, and an enthusiastic entrepreneur of new industries. He was Palestinian born, a rabid nationalist and strong supporter of the country's independence from Great Britain.

I had been in Egypt for about a week when I received a telegram to take the next possible transport to Palestine and to meet with a Mr. Joseph Jacobson at Rehovoth. At that particular time Egypt and Palestine were on good terms. Since our organization had a sister company, Misr Air, I was able to arrange a charter flight to Lydda, later Hebraized to Lod (now Ben Gurion International Airport), the airport at Tel Aviv. I landed there early in the morning of 19 February, right in the middle of the unrest with Great Britain and the continued problems arising out of illegal immigration into Palestine.

Once flight SU-ACI, a De Havilland Dove, had come to a stop on the tarmac, I was quickly hustled into a bus, which was protected with steel shutters, and taken to Tel Aviv. Joseph Jacobson awaited me at the bus stop and took me to the *Ramat Aviv Hotel*. A short time later I was moved to the *Dan Hotel* at Herzelyia. Neither of the hotels was particularly impressive. It was only then I was told that the bus between Lod and Tel Aviv regularly came under fire and in the past a number of passengers had been wounded. Joseph's office in Tel Aviv was at 87 Allenby Street. He was a *sabrah*, a Palestine born Jew and he introduced me to Dr. Akiva Persitz and his wife Hilda. Both were lawyers who assisted in my negotiations with government departments and possible investors in our rayon plant venture.

As the factory would need large amounts of water the township of Nathania was a sensible site. A meeting with the town's mayor was quickly arranged. I explained to him at great length the advantage of the factory's twenty-four hour operation and the small number of workers required due to our automated systems.

It was here I first ran into serious complications. Twenty-four hours of work was acceptable, but not on Saturdays and, Ben Ami, the mayor, made it clear that religious laws could not be broken. I continued my talks with other leaders, including





General Ephraim (Victor) Ben Arzi of the *Shirgun Hakzinim*, but ran into a stonewall at all levels. My highest contact, arranged by Joseph, was with Ben Gurion, the unquestionable leader of the political machine. His only interest appeared to be finding supporters and financial donors for underground groups such as the *Haganah Irgun* organizations. The *Irgun* was a militant right-wing body of Zionists and I was understandably concerned about dealing with them. Ben Gurion did present me with an autographed photograph in which he wears a smart Basque cap and is standing in the turret of a tank.

My father joined me in the negotiations but in spite of several attempts, even after speaking to the head of the powerful labor union, there was no possibility of changing religious laws that controlled the working conditions. Between our meetings I enjoyed being taken around and visited orange groves, a *kibutz* near Petach Tikva, the old township of Jaffa and the port of Haifa. In those days there were no tourist attractions one could visit. The entire country was in the midst of trying to bring immigrants into Palestine illegally, evading the British blockade. Armed Jewish forces regularly attacked police outposts and after dark any movement of residents and visitors was most inadvisable.

Getting absolutely nowhere in my negotiations I finally made reservations to leave Palestine. I was again transported to the airport in an armored bus and flew out of Lod on the twenty-sixth of February on Trans World Airways to Paris. The plane, a well used DC3, left at seven in the morning and after stopping at Athens and Rome we finally arrived in Paris at eight in the evening.

## NEW YORK APARTMENTS

When I came back to New York after the war I first lived with my parents in their apartment at 912 Fifth Avenue between Seventy Second and Seventy Third Street. The apartment faced Central Park and was on the Seventh Floor. Like most Fifth Avenue apartments at that time it had a uniformed doorman and an elevator operator. There was also a second elevator in the back of the apartment that handled the service and staff traffic.



From the elevator lobby on the seventh floor the entrance led into a long hallway connecting the front rooms with the dining room, bar and kitchen as well as the servants' quarters. The front rooms consisted of the living room and my parents' bedroom, both facing Central Park. There was an open fireplace in the living room. The middle part of the apartment was taken up with two bedrooms, two bathrooms, and hall closets for visitor's apparel. One of the bedrooms was used as a bar. The other I used as a bedroom and had been fitted out as a library. My parents did not feel it was acceptable for me to have visitors in their home more than three times a week. All flooring in the living room was parquet with Aubusson rugs. The other living areas had wall-to-wall carpeting; the walls were painted cream, the lighting crystal chandeliers and matching wall sconces. The living room was furnished with Louis



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Quinns pieces and a Bechstein grand piano. The walls in the bar were covered with mirrors and there was a full-length couch. The servants' quarters consisted of two bedrooms, a sitting room and a bathroom. In the basement was a fully furnished apartment for the use of guests. Fifth Avenue apartments did not have parking facilities. All residents used nearby garages with telephone pickup and delivery service. Since there was a strict no parking law along Fifth Avenue one either had a chauffeur or timed the garage delivery service to a maximum of five minutes wait in front of the building.

It was a delightful apartment and was used for regular gatherings of our staff and family. There were frequent photographs of those occasions and the one below includes our London staff. Standing from left to right are; myself, Gerry Bibb, Thomas Goeritz, Trevor Edwards, Joyce and Henry. Seated are Eric Goeritz, Cousin Dorli and Mrs Edwards.



My parents continued to travel a great deal and I indiscriminately invited my lady friends to visit our apartment. After one prolonged period of their absence, the doorman and elevator operator found it necessary to report to my parents the continued coming and going of young ladies to the seventh floor. As a result my mother placed an advertisement in the newspaper for a small bachelor's apartment. She found a perfect two-room pad on the first floor of Eight East Seventy Fifth Street just two blocks from home. She rented it unfurnished and personally delivered me there with the promise she would pay for the furnishings. She also arranged that one of their maids would come every day to do the house keeping, pick up the laundry and in every way make

my life comfortable. All without compromising my parent's life and their strictly regulated home.

I installed two air conditioning units, grey carpeting, black furniture with brass fittings, a folding dining table and two grey upholstered day beds. In one corner I had a full-scale bar installed with three glass shelves behind and three black upholstered bar stools in front. On the walls I was able to hang the Flemish paintings that I had purchased in Berlin. The kitchen was screened from the



living area by a silver colored Venetian blind divider. I negotiated and obtained the telephone number Butterfield Eight Four Four Four Four.

Having carte blanc I christened my apartment *Ralph's Red Room*, not so much because of the décor but rather due to a beautiful red Chinese jacket that I wore. I threw an opening party and had all comers sign my red guest book.

My mother, true to her word, had one of the maids come over the next morning to clean up the mess and this soon became the routine.

## VISITING THE FORTABATS

In 1948 I accompanied my parents on a visit to Buenos Aires. There my father



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negotiated a major financial project with an Argentine industrialist, Alfredo Fortabat. Since this was my mother's first trip to Argentina he and his tall beautiful wife, affectionately called Negra, entertained us royally.

We stayed in a suite at the *Plaza Hotel*. A small balcony protruded from the large French doors off the living room between our rooms. From that balcony we had a wonderful view over the city. To keep us occupied we had been invited to lunch at the Fortabat home, located on Avenida del Libertador, one of Buenos Aires' most exclusive avenues. This was to be followed by a cruise on their yacht, where we were also to take dinner. The following day, Saturday, we were to fly in the Fortabat's private plane to the family estancia to spend a weekend with the family, returning to our hotel on Monday.

A white car driven by a chauffeur decked out in a white uniform with polished boots and puttees, had been placed at our disposal for the entire time of our visit. He waited for us on Avenida Florida in front of the *Plaza Hotel*. Our invitation to lunch was for one o'clock and since punctuality was part of our lives, we were ready to leave the hotel at a quarter to one. On inquiry we were told that our hosts' residence was only five minutes from the hotel and at 12:55 we stepped into the limousine. Having arrived at our destination, the car swung off Avenida San Martin and, after opening a gate, we were driven down an incline into the subterranean private garage. A lift took us upstairs and we emerged from the cage on the first floor. A majordomo received us and explained in broken English that Don Alfredo and Dona Fortabat had not yet returned home. We were ceremoniously ushered into the large magnificently appointed drawing room, furnished in *Louis Seize* style, and bidden to wait. Drinks were offered and canapés passed around, but our hosts were still not with us.

Shortly before two o'clock a very distressed Negra came into the living room and apologized profusely. An invitation to come at one o'clock did not mean that we were expected at one. In Argentina everyone knew that you did not sit down to lunch until about three or half past and therefore nobody showed up for a one o'clock engagement until a quarter to three.

It was hard to tell who was more embarrassed. My parents at their lack of familiarity with Latin American customs, or our lovely hostess at her failure to anticipate American punctuality.

It was almost half past two before our host returned and the mutual apologies started all over again. Don Alfredo was the type of man who ordered his hairbrushes from Kent in London and the coachwork of his Rolls Royce from Keller in Paris. He was very tall, slim, with black hair brushed straight back and dressed in beautifully tailored suits. By three o'clock other guests arrived and at a quarter past three the majordomo (equivalent to an English butler) opened the door to the dining hall with a flourish and announced that luncheon was served. I had seen displays of great affluence before but this sight beggared anything I had come across. It looked more like an historical movie setting than a private home. There were twelve of us for lunch and twelve chairs surrounded a large

oval table that could have sat twenty-four. Behind each chair stood a footman in livery. They were dressed in identical silk suits with white knee stockings and it would only have needed white wigs to make the picture totally unreal. Our host marched in front with my mother at his arm followed by my dad escorting Dona Negra. Then came three more couples and I escorted Isabella O'Farrel, a young lady invited to make up the even dozen. Once we had been placed around the table I sought my mother's eyes to indicate to her how humorous I thought this display of wealth but she sensed my thoughts and studiously avoided my look.

The footmen pulled out each guest's chair and pushed it under us to be seated. The majordomo took his position behind our host and directed the entire proceedings like a silent drill sergeant. At his nod the staff turned and marched out to return with cups of steaming soup. When they were all in position the drill sergeant gave another nod and the team placed the cups before each of us at exactly the same moment. This teamwork went on throughout the meal. The soup cups were removed in unison, the fish course served at a uniform beat, then the meat and salad and finally the dessert. The majordomo got into the act when the roast beef was rolled in on a carving wagon and he performed the surgery while his troops passed in review, each bearing the plate of the guest he was serving.

Luncheon was finally over, the coffee and liqueurs had been served, and fat Havana cigars were passed around. They were slowly undressed from their banderols and fondled before a flame carefully held beneath the tip to get them going. The atmosphere was hazy with smoke when the large *Bleu de Roi* Sèvres clock on the mantelpiece tinkled six a clock. What a time to finish lunch!

Another half hour passed with lengthy talks about *el presidente* Perón and his blonde wife Evita. This former army colonel had taken Argentina by storm and the feelings of our hosts and the guests were divided as to whether it was a blessing for the country or the end of the road. Eva Duarte had created a huge following among the *descamisado* (the shirtless, the poor) and enormous amounts of money were extracted from the wealthy to give to them. I had learned over lunch that Isabella, my table partner, was the daughter of the former president of Argentina who had been recently assassinated.

Finally our hosts suggested we might wish to return to the hotel to get ready for the cruise and that we would be called for at eight. My dad and Don Alfredo went through one performance, while my mother and Dona Negra repeated the whole spiel. Each assured the other that eight o'clock meant eight and not nine; the car would really be at the hotel punctually.

We were ready and actually left on time. When we arrived at the Yacht Club Argentino we were driven onto the jetty alongside the motor cruiser and walked directly up the gangway. The yacht flew both the Argentine Yacht Club burgee and that of the Yacht Club Uruguayo, Dona Negra being a Uruguayan from Montevideo.

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After the palatial surroundings of the Fortabat home the yacht was a letdown. Less than twenty meters, it was obviously built for river boating and did not appear to have been designed for offshore cruising. We were guided into the main cabin and as soon as the engines had started the doors were tightly closed and the crew turned on the air conditioning. Dinner, consisting of a buffet meal, had been arranged and we wandered to the sideboard to fill our plates with slices of fillet steak and salads, while the stewards served champagne in tall fluted glasses from a silver tray.

By now the engines were humming below and the yacht well underway. As far as I was concerned I had come to go yachting and the food was only secondary. Asking permission to go on deck I had already turned to leave the main cabin when our host stopped me.

"You can't go on deck," he exclaimed. "You'll be eaten alive."

"Eaten alive! By what?" I wanted to know.

"Mosquitos en todas partes. Mosquitoes everywhere."

I was not worried; I had experienced mosquitoes in the Middle East, India, and in Egypt. Argentine mosquitoes couldn't be any worse. I laughed politely, assured Don Alfredo that a few mosquitoes would not bother me and left through the forward door leading onto the enclosed side deck and then out onto the foredeck. The yacht was cutting through the water at about five knots, decks lit up like a Christmas tree and strong bow lights lighting up the river ahead. Someone on the bridge above was swinging a large searchlight back and forth and its bright beam was picking up pieces of timber, crates and boxes, flotsam and other boats.

Then the mosquitoes found me. It was like a veil had suddenly been pulled over my face. The mosquitoes were buzzing delightedly around and told all their friends of this new supply of blood they had discovered. By the time I had swallowed my pride and retreated to the enclosed side deck I had dozens of bites on my cheeks, neck, hands and ankles. The bites burned only momentarily and then started to itch and itch and itch.

I walked back to the main cabin and wandered in nonchalantly. One look at me, and the assembled guests burst out laughing. While the mosquitoes had their fill of me I had been slapping them dead and had managed to leave little blood spurts all over my face and hands. I had not seen that in the dark and now realized that my nonchalance did not fool anybody. I joined in the laughter and was relieved that now I could scratch unashamedly. Our hosts called for methylated spirits and special cream and after washing my bites and covering them with the salve I felt almost human again.

I still wanted to see more of our cruise and the boat itself and asked permission to join the captain on the bridge while we were underway. The bridge, like the rest of the boat's main living and work areas, was totally enclosed and when I joined the skipper I entered a hot but well sprayed area where any unsuspecting mosquito either stayed out or expired.

We were approaching a bay somewhere in the delta of the *Rio de la Plata* (River Plate) when the skipper slowed the yacht. “*Escarabajo*,” he called to one of the crew and instructed him to  *echar el ancla*, to drop the anchor. Most of what was being said was beyond me. My high-school Spanish certainly did not suffice to let me understand what instructions were given, but when I saw *Escarabajo* go to the bow and undo a shackle I retroactively understood the command that had been given.

Here the mosquitoes were not so thick as the breeze from the sea seemed to drive them away. By the time the anchor was down and we were lying to the wind, the last of the mosquitoes had been blown away and the lights went on at the aft deck. There a bar was set up and a few minutes later the Fortabats escorted my parents from the main cabin onto the deck and sat in the cool evening breeze to sip their champagne or iced liqueurs.

Surprisingly, at this late hour, there was quite a bit of traffic on the river and as we sat we could watch the boats make their run for the harbors of Buenos Aires. I had been told of the sudden *pamperos* that could appear without warning and could prevent us from returning to the yacht basin for many hours. That, of course, was music to my ears and I was desperately hoping for such a *pampero* to develop and keep us aboard while riding out the blow.

Neither the skipper nor Dona Negra shared this hope. However I was to be in luck. Within a few moments it started to blow up and *El Capitan* ordered a second anchor to be laid, adjusting the first to maintain an even pull on both chains. The engines were kept running and all guests went back inside the main cabin. I preferred to stay on the bridge to talk to the captain who spoke very good English and had been the master of a large British yacht in Florida. He explained about the Rio Plata's heavy commercial traffic and that most yacht owners cruised extensively up the river but seldom used their boats for coastal cruising.

It was close to three in the morning when the wind had abated sufficiently and we picked up the anchors and steamed back towards the yacht club. Most of the guests had settled down to play cards. From the bridge I enjoyed watching the ship's master take the boat up the river through heavy traffic and many obstacles. When we were alongside the jetty it was almost dawn. An hour later we were back at the *Plaza Hotel* to start the weekend dead tired and ready for what we hoped would be a good rest in the peace and quiet on the Fortabat family farm. Little did we know!

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At the appointed time we were chauffeured to the local airport and taken directly to a runway where the Fortabat's plane was waiting. As a pilot the sight of the relatively small plane did not bother me much, but my parents, used to large commercial airliners, were appalled when they saw the twin engine Beechcraft



with the marking LV-NCZ waiting for us. Later I heard my mother say that after watching me learn to fly nothing could frighten her. Perhaps that was on her mind when this photo was taken.

In November around Buenos Aires the weather is mostly calm and the sky clear and we were blessed with perfect visibility and a smooth flight to the *estancia's* airfield.

Don Alfredo, dressed in a smart belted leather jacket and long white scarf, redolent of a First World War pilot, took the controls. I was delegated co-pilot and took the right hand seat. We quickly took off and were soon heading away from the industrial area and to what looked like farmland. We had flown for about thirty minutes and the noise of the engines had prevented much conversation. Now Don Alfredo tapped me on my arm and pointed ahead. Then he described a half circle with his arm, his palm facing forward. Next he repeated the movement with his palm facing inward indicating the gathering in of all the land. He then tapped himself on his chest, clearly pointing out that he wanted me to realize that all the land around us, as far as we could see, was his. There were fields of corn, wheat and grazing land for the many heads of black Aberdeen Angus cattle that scattered when our plane zoomed noisily over their heads.

Soon there appeared on the horizon, amidst all the cornfields, a bright green tree-filled oasis-like area with a number of houses. The houses were only a short distance from the landing strip and as soon as we had landed and



stopped rolling an old-fashioned limousine pulled up to the plane. We climbed aboard to be taken to the *estancia*. What we had not seen from the air were the hundreds of wonderful colored parrots that populated the trees. Being fed regularly, they did not try to escape and were not the least bit shy. When holding out one's hand, some came to land and did not shy away when being scratched on the back of their head. All the staff wore Argentinean national dress, with gaucho trousers and wide sleeved shirts for the men and colorful skirts and blouses for the women. Many of the men were mounted on horses and carried *bolos*, a three-balled throwing device used to hobble the cattle.

At the door into the house stood a servant with a silver tray on which stood silver tumblers with silver suction tubes. It was *mate*, a local tea-like brew with the leaves floating in the tumbler. The bottom end of the suction tube had a sieve and allowed the tea to be sucked up minus the leaves. Having tried some of this rather unappealing welcoming drink, we were quickly assigned rooms, with local apparel waiting for us to dress for the evening fiesta. While I thought my father and I looked rather smart in wide gaucho trousers and short embroidered jackets, my mother, not exactly slim, looked somewhat comical in the Spanish style native dress with a *mantilla* over her hair.

Later in the afternoon, Isabella, my date for the weekend arrived, chaperoned by her mother, the widow of the murdered former Argentine President O'Farrel. She spoke English fluently and was a wonderful dancer. Later she tried valiantly to teach me various Argentine local dances of the pampas, confusing me with feet stamping, tango dips and waltz-like turns.

Subsequently Isabella's mother invited me to visit the O'Farrel *estancia* where I spent a weekend. She collected me in her open Triumph sports car and, once we were out of the city traffic, put her foot down and drove to their farm like a racing car driver. We spent most of the afternoon on horses, riding over the extensive property and looking at large herds of cattle. The evening meal, properly chaperoned by Isabella's mama, was dull. A wind-up gramophone provided music and we danced for a little while before turning in. I remember the ordeal of the return trip on Sunday evening which was, if possible, even more frightening, with Isabella refusing to slow down, even after entering the traffic of the city. Probably a remainder from the days when her father was *El Presidente* and the traffic gave way before his cavalcade of cars, their sirens blaring.

After the weekend, back in Buenos Aires, we settled down to the main reason for our visit to Argentina. We had appointed our Peruvian director Carlos Dogny as our agent for Argentina. Later we appointed as our lawyer Enrique Abramovich, who was to handle the expected payoff to Eva Perón at the time of finalizing our contract with the Argentine client. At that time no business could be undertaken without making a negotiated payment to Señora Perón, ostensibly for her political party. Lucky for us, history controlled the timing and we did not sign the agreement to set up new factories until the Peróns were replaced.

### VENEZUELA

Our activities in other South American countries created interest among Venezuelan investors and we were requested to send one of our executives to Caracas. I left New York on 15 February 1949 and flew PANAM via Puerto Rico and the Dutch colony Curaçao to Caracas. I did not return to the States until the 24th and had formed a strong opinion that Venezuela was not then ready to sustain a man-made fiber industry.

We landed at the airport near La Guaira and then took the long and winding road up to the capital city. We had appointed Heriberto Zander as our agent for Venezuela. He waited for me at the airport and took me to the *Avila Hotel*, Caracas' leading hostelry. The country was obviously wealthy. On the town's main shopping street, La Florida, the stores were well stocked with all sorts of American goods rather than the poor display of foreign products in other South American principal cities.

In 1949 Venezuela was a major oil producer and the lack of import duty made foreign goods inexpensive and readily available. That was also one of the reasons why I doubted the economic feasibility of a local man-made fiber industry. Imported yarns came in duty free and a local industry would have to fight against the large foreign producers. The principal investor who negotiated with me was Jacobo Benatar and I visited his new office building, *Edificio Benatar*, a recently completed eight floor structure. Señor Benatar, was the owner of this real estate on which his previous two floor building had stood. The streets were narrow and traffic almost impossible. The government had decreed that all new buildings had to cede a three-meter depth across the entire street frontage to allow for the widening of the road. This decree was carried out over a ten year period. Driving in Caracas became a nightmare with a street being wide at points where the law had already been enacted, then narrowing at others where the buildings on both sides were still occupying their original space. Parking was only permitted at locations where newly erected buildings on both sides of the street had made the road six meters wider.

There were several restrictive laws that made the establishment of new industries difficult and even questionable. I called on the American Embassy and worked with their commercial attaché, Enoch William Skartvedt. The oil industry had few problems as the government was fully supporting the exploration of the country's oil reserves. Other industries negotiating the establishment of new enterprises found many difficulties placed in their way.

### AUSTRALIA AND MARRIAGE

In 1949 discussions with Henry resulted in a decision to set up operations in

Australia. Al Daff, my jujitsu partner in Japan, was by then living in New York and President of the Australia American Association. He recommended Overseas Corporation be our agent. As a result I arranged to visit Australia.

I arrived in Sydney from Honolulu via Midway on 17 March 1949. Two days later I flew to Melbourne where I stayed until 3 July. John Storey, had picked me up at the airport and put me up at the Atheneum Club on Collins Street but a few days later I moved into the *Hotel Australia* further down the road. John Storey was chairman of Overseas Corporation. Their general manager was Allen Davis, a former government employee, and I saw a lot of him during my stay and together we visited potential clients. I soon got used to the Australian drinking habits and in particular the iced, almost undrinkable cold draught beer. I admit the coolness was a blessing on hot days in Melbourne.

A possibly important client for our future rayon thread production was the Olympic Rubber and Tyre Company and I met with their chairman, Sir Frank Beaurepaire. Frank was a swimming gold medal winner in the 1928 Olympics and had named his company after his success. He lived in a house with a tennis court that adjoined a court belonging to Harry Hopman of Davis Cup fame. Harry's pride was a huge melon that had accidentally grown on his tennis court and which he nurtured every day. One night Sir Frank had workers quietly lift the dividing fence, move the melon onto his court and replace the fence. Sir Frank had invited several friends that morning to surreptitiously observe Harry's morning stroll and the discovery of the transposed melon. The next morning was a hilarious occasion when Harry found his melon on the wrong side of the fence. Harry was very deaf and had not heard any of the noise from moving the fence. It ended with the melon being ceremoniously carved and all invited guests and Harry being served.

Other important future clients were George Foletta, chairman of Prestige Hosiery and Stanley Korman, owner of Holeproof Hosiery, all located in Melbourne.

I conducted negotiations with respect to the flotation of a share issue with one of Melbourne's leading share brokers, W. S. Smith Limited. Hugh Wallace Smith, the managing partner, became a close friend of mine and later my best man when I married. He was also a director of Overseas Corporation. John Storey, Frank Richardson and Norman Myer had only recently formed that company. Overseas Corporation represented a number of select American companies, including the Doughnut Corporation, and was created to bring a number of new industries to Australia.

Frank Richardson, a widower, was managing director of Cox Brothers, a large haberdashery and ladies' wear establishment and Norm headed his deceased uncle, Sir Sydney Myer's, emporium stores in Sydney and Melbourne. Hugh, Frank and Norm were close neighbors, living in Toorak, and later that year all three officiated at my wedding.

The battle of the Coral Sea was celebrated on May 10th at a function in

## Cellulose to Cell Phones

Melbourne and John Storey had invited me to act as escort for his twenty-one year old daughter Diana Fay. When I arrived at the Storey residence I was told that John and his wife Alma had been called urgently to Sydney and I was asked to escort Diana on my own. We certainly 'hit it off'. We dated the following evenings and on May 14th considered ourselves engaged, subject to John and Alma's approval. Diana cleared the way with her parents and the afternoon of the following Sunday I officially called on John to ask for his daughter's hand in marriage. It was a beautiful sunny day and I was ushered into the lounge and asked to wait. The rest of the house was very quiet. I waited and finally heard John's car rolling up to the house on the gravel drive. He came in and slammed the front door with an ominous crash. When he walked into the lounge his face could not have looked more fierce.

"I am very upset with you," he greeted me. "Because of you, I lost the tournament. Every time I was addressing the ball I told myself that you would be waiting at home asking to marry Fay. Every time I hit the ball I sliced and I never played a worse game. Driving back from the club I finally decided I might as well say yes. I could not stand going through another day like that. So, if you still want her, you have my approval."

Diana, or Fay, as she was called at home, had been waiting and listening outside the door and as soon as her father had given his okay, came bursting into the room, her mother close behind. We were now officially engaged but I had yet to advise my parents of what I was up to, half a world away in the antipodes.

Sir Walter Massey Greene, chairman of Australian Paper Manufacturing Company, and his nephew, Wilfred D. Brookes, Managing director of the competitive Australian Pulp and Paper Manufacturing Company, were potential investors. Believing in the old adage that a picture is worth a thousand words, I suggested Wilfred accompany me to Egypt where he could see one of our plants in operation and talk to our clients and partners on the spot. I intended to then continue on to Austria to see my parents who were visiting Vienna. I would then fly to New York and prepare my bachelor's apartment for a wife, return to Melbourne and get married. I had talked the Storey family into holding the wedding on 1 September, the first day of spring in the southern hemisphere.

All went well. Wilfred and I visited our factory at Kafr el Dawar in Egypt and he could not fail to be impressed with our operations. He flew on to London while I continued on to Vienna. I explained to my father and mother that my bride to be was definitely not a descendant of English convicts. Instead she was descended from an English shipbuilder, grand daughter of the Premier of New South Wales and daughter of the recent managing director of General Motors in Australia. On the maternal side the family were German apothecaries. Above all, as far as my parents were concerned, I was convinced that they would quickly learn to love their daughter-in-law. Regardless of their reaction, I was in love and most anxious to return to Melbourne and my waiting fiancée. In New York I quickly refurbished my bachelor's pad into a temporary apartment for two,

a permanent home to be selected once Diana arrived in the USA.

I arrived back in Australia August tenth, with barely enough time to give Diana's friends an opportunity to invite us to a number of good-luck and farewell parties. The Storey's had decided that, instead of staying at a hotel, I should live at their home at 402 Wattletree Road in East Malvern, thus making it easier for all of us to get to know each other. September first came quickly.

David Ferber, the American Consul in Melbourne, had agreed to act in loco parentis and was their official representative. The Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies, was a very close friend of the Storeys. He took time out from his busy life to vet me personally. He interviewed me, learning about my family, and then congratulated me on my wonderful choice of a wife. Later I learned that he had me checked out through his own sources and had been satisfied. Norman Myer and Frank Richardson had agreed to be my groomsmen, as had Diana's brother Keith. My best man was Hugh Wallace Smith. Amongst Diana's six bridesmaids were Pam Salmon, later to become Lady Myers when she married Norman, and Fay, whose last name I cannot remember, who became Lady Askin when she married the Premier of New South Wales.

It seemed that we had selected our bridal party quite cleverly. Both Norman and Frank were knighted a few years later, but sadly both died shortly after. John Storey was honored with a KCMG for his unique work for the Australian Government as the head of aircraft production during the war and in later years for his work as head of immigration. The press were interested in the marriage of a Melbourne lass to a foreign baron. The list of all members of the wedding party was welcome food for the Australian newspapers and magazines, detailing the gowns, going away clothes and details of Melbourne's wedding of the year. The service was held at St. John's Church in Toorak. To keep the guests happy and occupied while we signed the various papers, a famous Aboriginal singer Herbert Namatjira had been engaged to entertain with his superb voice. The reception was held in the *Hotel Australia's* ballroom and over three hundred guests sat down to a wedding breakfast. Speech after speech, from the Prime Minister down, went on for a long time until finally the cake had been cut and the wedding waltz played. Diana and I left the party to change into our matching going away suits, gray slacks and skirt respectively, with fine plaid identical jackets. One more appearance in the ballroom, good-bye to all the guests and then on our way to the airport for our flight to Sydney, accompanied by all the family.

We stayed at the *Wentworth Hotel* where we of course occupied the bridal suite. The next day the celebration continued. Over one hundred guests had been invited to a luncheon with grandmother, brothers, sisters, cousins, nieces and nephews of the Storey family, who were originally from Sydney. There were so many people to meet and I did not know one of them. That night we left on the first part of the honeymoon, a flight to Singapore, via Darwin. At Singapore we stayed at a hotel out of town, owned by one of Diana's former school mates.



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We continued our travel west with stops at Calcutta, Karachi and Cairo. After our arrival in Cairo we were driven to the small white marble guesthouse owned by Afifi Pasha. It was situated with the desert to the west and an oasis to the east. This 'oasis' was man-made and was one of the earliest large scale hydroponics farms.

Afifi Pasha had personally taken us to his guesthouse and ordered lunch. We were served among other things a crisp green salad. That was a vegetable one usually did not dare to touch for fear of contracting cholera or plague. Hafez leaned closer to me and whispered:

"You know, this salad comes from my garden and does not cost me one piaster."

"That is really wonderful," I replied politely, thinking of the tens of thousand of pounds it must have cost our host to pump water from the nearby Nile canal to his land, the construction of hydroponic gardens and the gardeners that looked after this agricultural miracle. The same bountiful supply of money obviously meant the lettuce was healthy.

Among various other fruit trees on the property was a stand of mango trees and in September the fruits were lusciously ripe. We drove around the estate in a small open jeep and, equipped with knives and spoons, gorged ourselves on the delicious mangoes, dripping the sweet sticky juice all over the jeep and ourselves.

It was a delightful stop in Egypt that had to end as there was work waiting for me in Vienna. We flew from Cairo via Zürich. Our honeymoon had been thirteen days of travel and joy.

We kept in touch with our Australian friends. Sir Norman's nephew, Ken Myer, who had been sent to the USA to study merchandising at Macy's, was a frequent guest at our apartment at One Thousand Park Avenue in New York. Very tragically Ken was killed in 1992, in a plane crash while on a fishing trip in Alaska. He was found in the burned wreckage of his charter plane about five hundred kilometers southwest of Anchorage.

On 7 November 1949 I brought Diana to my apartment in New York at 8 East Seventy Fifth Street. I only expected to live there until we found a larger more suitable family apartment. Two days later, when I came home from the office, I found Diana in tears, trying to wash our bed linen in the bath tub with a piece of soap. She rightly complained that at her home in Melbourne there was at least a washing machine. What was she to do? I quickly set her straight. There was a maid coming daily and all menial tasks were taken care of, including making the beds.

We advertised for an apartment in the Fifth Avenue, Park Avenue, Second Avenue area and were fortunate in finding a beautiful seven-room apartment at One Thousand Park Avenue. This was really fun for us. We went to the antique furniture auctions, visited the antique shops on Madison and Lexington Avenues, went to Baldwin Piano on Fifty Seventh Street and selected a baby

grand. We decided to leave Ralph's Red Room furniture behind and order new bedroom, dining room and guest room furniture. We had curtain people come in from Bloomingdales. Diana ordered the linens and once the shipped wedding presents had been unpacked, made lists of the household items that had to be bought. It included a washing machine, dryer, dishwasher, vacuum cleaner, toaster and on and on. A wedding present from one of my mother's friends was the complete installation of boxes, bands, ribbons, all in soft green, to lay out two complete closets for Diana's table and personal linens.

One Thousand Park Avenue was our home until 1956 when we found our Dream House in White Plains.

## **YUGOSLAVIA AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA**

Diana and I had no sooner arrived in Vienna at the end of our honeymoon than I had to travel to Belgrade. In order to enter or leave Vienna in any direction, other than to the American occupied zone, the Russian occupying authority had to issue a special pass. Theoretically those permits were to be issued automatically to a citizen of the four occupying forces but, in fact, the Russians often delayed the issuance for weeks on end. I went to the Allied Permit Office and called on Lt. Sokouta, the Russian liaison officer and applied for my permit. Luck was with me and three days later he stamped my American passport with the four-lingual certification. I was now ready to leave Vienna.

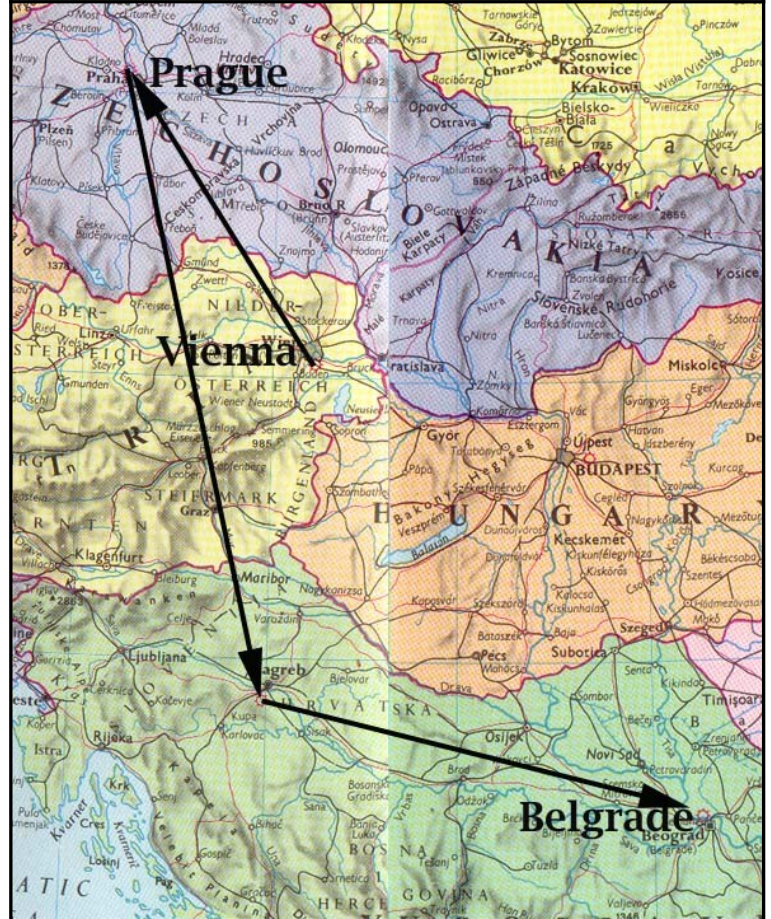
When we lived in Tokyo, one of the courses we had to take as part of the curriculum of the American School in Japan, was typing. In later years I often blessed my teacher, Miss Münzenmayer. Thanks to her I was able to keep daily notes of meetings and important data by a routine evening entry using my little Baby Hermès. That was a light portable typewriter only recently brought on the market in Switzerland. The 'Baby' traveled with me as cabin luggage wherever I went.

On the 15th of October 1949 I set off for Belgrade. The easiest way to get there from Vienna was to take PANAM to Prague, change planes there and fly with JAT, the Yugoslav airline, first to Zagreb and then on to Belgrade. I went to the Vienna airport at Schwechat. The Russians had their own airport, restricted to their own commercial and military aircraft. Our DC3 left Schwechat about nine in the morning and we arrived in Prague just before ten. The JAT flight left after one and after just a few minutes I saw a military aircraft flying next to us. Moments later we descended and landed at what was quite obviously a military airport with rows of Russian planes. We were directed off the runway onto the grass verge and stopped rolling quite a distance from the airport buildings. A Russian jeep, loaded with soldiers, came alongside our JAT plane YU-ABI. After a few moments of very terse jabbering between our pilot and the Russian officer in the jeep we were cleared and allowed to prepare for take-off. We slowly rolled across the grass towards the runway and once we were back on

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the tarmac the pilot obviously found something wrong. He stopped the engines, came out of the front cabin, the plane exit door was opened and he jumped down to the ground.

When he returned he was furious and explained in Yugoslav and German that he had found a large nail driven into one of the undercarriage's front tires and that we had a flat on the right side. He was quite outspoken and accused the Soviets of having placed the nail under the tire while we had stopped on the grass verge. The reason for this specially



created flat became later obvious. The Russians refused to give us any assistance. Our flight staff, that is the two pilots and the stewardess, walked to the gate and negotiated the loan of a jeep, some timber, and an ordinary car jack. They also obtained permission for the passengers to leave the airport. The crew then built a support, jacked up the plane and removed the DC3 tire. This they loaded onto the jeep and transported the wheel and passengers successively to the airport gate. This being in the Russian sector, no taxis were available and we all took a bus back to Vienna. I arrived back at the *Hotel Astoria* late that evening not knowing when we would make the next try to get to Belgrade.

After two days we were finally called together, transported back to Vöslau and took off for Zagreb. Our pilot, who had pieced the whole interlude together, explained to us that the Soviets had wanted to examine diplomatic mail carried on our plane from Prague to Belgrade, as well as the baggage of some of the passengers. They had created the entire incident to give them two days time to make their examinations in peace and quiet. This explanation could be true, it could also have been possible that the flat was an accident and built into a minor incident by the pilot. I finally arrived in Belgrade on the 15th at two thirty in the afternoon after having first left Vienna on the 13th at nine in the morning; fifty-two and a half hours for a distance of five hundred kilometers by air.

Vati and I rushed from one meeting to another, all over Europe. Appointments had to be kept, no matter what. From 1950 onwards the availability of air travel made that possible. A typical example of my father's insistence for keeping every appointment occurred in 1959 when we were in Zürich and had to get to Vienna, six hundred kilometers due east. With no commercial plane connection available we did the best we could, chartered a tiny one-engine Miles Geronimo and flew three hundred kilometers due north to Frankfurt. There we only just

made the connection with a PANAM DC3 flight, taking us six hundred kilometers southeast to Vienna.

We negotiated with a large company in Czechoslovakia concerning the supply of machinery and chemical processes. The company was a nationalized former privately owned organization known as Chemické závody Dynamitka Nobel, and had its main offices and plants in Bratislava, which is today the capital of the republic of Slovakia. The fastest way to reach our client was to have them pick us up in their private plane, a German built *Storch BF109*. Dynamitka had a private landing strip, just a few hundred meters long but it proved more than adequate. After the twenty minute flight the plane settled down like a butterfly at a landing speed of only thirty kilometers per hour and stopped rolling just a few meters after touch down.

The general manager of the plant was the engineer Vilam Riša with whom we negotiated the company's future requirements for machinery. We signed an agreement for the supply of Von Kohorn design rayon machinery to be shipped from Germany (Krupp) and Japan (Mitsubishi.) payment for the equipment was arranged through our company banking house, International Finance Corporation of Two Park Avenue, New York, then under the guidance of our long time friend Al Daff whom we had appointed Vice President. Later he also assisted us in our negotiations in India with the Nanubhai consortium. Al Daff had recently retired from his position of Executive Vice President of Universal Pictures Corporation in Hollywood and had joined the Von Kohorn organization as a Vice President in charge of foreign investments (India, Egypt).

We also visited one of our former clients at one of the offices and factories of the worldwide Bata organization at Baticovce. We arrived by train from Prague but on our return journey were sent back on the company's private plane, a recently acquired Beechcraft flown by a Czech ex-air force pilot.

Back in 1949 Prague, the capital city, was our headquarters for forays into the interior of Czechoslovakia. In those days there was only one modern hotel, the *Alkron* on the Štěpánska. We visited the displays in the show rooms of the government owned Moser Glass Factory. We also called on a world famous porcelain factory. We were shown samples of plates and dishes, emblazoned with crests, supplied to royal houses, the Vatican and many foreign embassies. Vati ordered a complete set, with our crest on the plates.

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The Von Kohorn organization concluded an agreement for the installation of a



very large industrial complex at Loznica, Yugoslavia, about a hundred kilometers southwest of Belgrade, then the country's capital. Our local agent was Vaso Vasiljevic and we soon became friends with him and his wife Mira. We established an office in Belgrade and were even honored by the visit of President Tito when we had successfully put the new plant into operation. In the photograph Vaso is on the left. Next to him is President Tito. Tito's wife Pelagija Belousova is to the right. There were few amusements or diversions in Belgrade and it was fortunate that Diana was with me. After having visited Avala, the Yugoslav memorial to the Unknown Soldier, and sipped afternoon tea at the Diplomatski Klub, there really was little else to do. We had rented, what was jokingly referred to as a luxury suite, at the *Majestic*. The hotel was then reserved for foreign visitors. It was clean but dull and pathetic with furniture going back to the First World War.

In the evenings we went to movies whenever we found one in English. Otherwise the only entertainment was to visit one of the local coffee houses and thumb through months-old foreign language newspapers or magazines. Invitations to the homes of our acquaintances were non-existent. These homes were tiny apartments assigned by the state and did not lend themselves to entertaining friends, let alone foreign visitors. On the other hand, invitations by us to our Yugoslav friends were accepted with much gratitude. Once we became acquainted with the best restaurants and, more importantly, their



respective head waiters, our evenings turned into quite tolerable relaxation, listening to resident musicians and endless discussions about the harshness of the government.

Local food was on the whole excellent. We soon learned the difference between Serbian, Slovenian and Croatian food, Macedonian or Dalmatian wines and which brand of Slivovic to order. There were several varieties of salami served with chili peppers and it needed a strong constitution to go to bed and sleep soundly. The heavy meals of spicy gulasch soup and a variety of kebabs on skewers were followed by several cups of Turkish coffee. The powdered coffee grounds were brewed three times in the long-handled copper pots. At the end of the third boiling the sludge stayed at the bottom and the liquid on top was clear.

Originally we flew to Belgrade on any of a number of European airlines, all using Boeing DC3's, including the local Yugoslav Air Transport, JAT. Later we found it more convenient to use our own car and drove from Vienna via Ljubljana and then on the Hitler-built autobahn to Zagreb, thence to the capital. When our Cadillac caused a lot of unwelcome comments about capitalist foreigners we shipped a Ford Falcon station wagon to Europe, which continued to carry the Connecticut license plate, VKIC (Von Kohorn International Corp). This still attracted attention, but with less antagonism against the visitors. In those days having a license plate that only showed letters, without any numbers, was unknown in Europe and resulted for several years in the police being completely befuddled. We were never stopped for any infringement, *au contraire*; we usually were rewarded with a smart hand salute and waived on with a stern mien.

To reach our plant site at Loznica in Serbia, about a hundred kilometers south west of Belgrad, we turned off the *Autobahn* at Ruma and headed for our chemical factory via Šabac. The complex was simply called VISKOZA, was government owned and when ultimately completed, employed over five thousand men and women. The new industry had been granted loans by the United States, England, Japan and Germany and our organization had negotiated the financing, organized the supply of machinery and equipment and also furnished the technical know-how and supervisory staff. During the six years of our supervision and the creation of the new industry, Yugoslavia had emerged from a strictly communist controlled government to a much more western friendly nation and was already well on the way to a free democracy. Little did anyone foresee the many years of ethno-religious wars that would develop during the nineteen nineties.



## SAFFORD, ARIZONA



In late 1950 the world political situation had deteriorated considerably and there was a worldwide apprehension of what the future would bring. There was much talk about a possible atomic attack on the United States and many people were looking for shelters in areas that were the least likely to be a target for an atomic bomb. With concern for the safety of Henry's children and our families, we looked for a comparatively safe area and decided to acquire a small farm in Arizona. Our study led us to look at a valley along the Gila River protected by high mountains and we decided to fly there and find some land and an existing house.

On 9 December 1950 Henry, Joyce, Diana and I flew via Chicago to Phoenix, Arizona. We rented a car and drove to Safford, a small farming town, to have a good look around the area. The local sheriff suggested a real estate agent to whom we explained our requirements and we then drove through the town and found a motel for the night. Dressed in our usual New York clothing we were very conspicuous as everyone else wore jeans and check shirts. We quickly complied with the local dress code and atmosphere.

The following day we started looking at small farms. There was no shortage of properties for sale and we visited several to get a feeling for prices and types of homes available. We were not concerned with the soil and the availability of water for irrigation. More important were easy access to Safford and the home's connection to electricity, domestic water supply and telephone system. The following day we found a place we all liked, the price was in line with our thinking and it was immediately available. Our corporate lawyer in New York handled the legal matters, our office the finances and after meeting some of the town's 'important citizens' we left on 13th December to fly on a Frontier Air Line DC3 from the Safford airport to Phoenix, Arizona and then back to New York.

After all commercial details had been settled, Diana and I left New York on 6 February 1951 and flew to El Paso, Texas. We stayed over night and continued early the next morning to Safford. We had pre-arranged to rent a station wagon at the airport and after checking in at a motel, drove to 'our' farm about five miles from the town. The previous owners had cleaned up the house and when we opened the door with the key, obtained from the real estate agent, we walked into a spic and span and completely empty farmhouse. We were short on time and had hoped to totally furnish the home before we had to leave on the fourteenth. Six days to shop, arrange for the delivery and set up the furniture for two couples and Henry and Joyce's three young boys.

There were four bedrooms and two bathrooms with toilets upstairs. Downstairs were the dining, living room, office, a large kitchen with ample shelves, laundry and pantry and a toilet. We needed everything to completely furnish a home for seven. We were back in Safford by ten and went to the largest store. I had a talk with the manager and asked him to give us the name of his bank so that I could cable transfer a sum of money to enable him to make immediate delivery of the items we were going to buy. We had passed a Great Western store and that was definitely my next stop. Diana and I were very quickly rigged out in western clothes, including cowboy boots and large hats, proper shirts and those narrow shoelace ties with a western motif tie clasp. I also bought a 22-caliber Remington repeater and ammunition, to shoot rabbits.

We changed into our new gear, made a quick visit to a nearby chiliburger bar and went back to the department store. We purchased the almost endless list of items that most people acquire over several years: - beds, mattresses, blankets, electric heaters, large tables, bedside tables, two sofas, washing machine, refrigerator and freezer, electric dryer, ironing board and iron, fittings for curtain rods, drapes to draw over the windows, television, cutlery, towels, etc. We were promised the first delivery before six in the evening and used the time to buy the first load of food staples for our own needs. Then we went back to the motel where we put our luggage in the station wagon and took the first load to our new home.

While we were still unloading, a truck arrived with two helpers and it took about an hour to carry everything inside. We had stressed that we needed the beds, blankets and linens urgently and they were pleased to unload them. Between the five of us we soon had the items distributed in the rooms upstairs and downstairs and it almost looked like a home. We had bought essential food but we had failed to buy pots and pans, dishes and glasses. We had also failed to bring along a few bottles of beer. One of the truckers took pity on us and promised to return with a few items from his own home. True to his promise he and his wife came a little later and 'acted neighborly', loaning us the items so that we could cook dinner and breakfast. He told us that the entire town knew of the New Yorkers who had bought a farm and were going to use it as a holiday place. Hence the ease with which we had been able to make our purchases and charge everything to our account back east.

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That night we slaved until after midnight, setting up the beds with mattresses, putting up curtains, unpacking, pulling wrapping off the refrigerator, stove and other electric items. The telephone was not yet hooked up, but was promised for the following morning. We made up lists of jobs for tradesmen and items bought but not yet delivered.

In the morning we had breakfast, using the borrowed frying pan and dishes and left early to continue our shopping. The next days passed quickly, we had the telephone man, a plumber to modernize the showers and an electrician to add about a dozen new outlets for bed-lamps, television and the kitchen. By the thirteenth the home was as complete as we could make it in such a short time. The curtains were hung; blankets and pillows were on the beds and staple food on the shelves in the kitchen with a few bottles of California wine and several large containers of bottled water. Our plane left from the Safford airport at 4:45 for El Paso where we connected with our flight to New York, arriving home the next day at noon.

I left a few days later for South America, returning back to New York on March 15th. There was a recent message to contact the sheriff at Safford. I phoned and was told that burglars had broken into our farmhouse and had cleaned it out. Not only had all the contents been stolen, but even the wires had been pulled out of the conduits. The house was worse than when we started. Our office had automatically insured the house and contents and since I had providentially turned all bills, invoices and receipts over to them, complete restitution was made immediately. Diana and I left again on March 26th for Europe and neither of us ever returned to Safford, Arizona in the Gila Valley. It was an episode that one can only look back at with some sadness. Obviously someone in the town must have decided that the fully stocked lonely farmhouse, with only a county sheriff passing once in a while, was waiting to be robbed.

## ECUADOR

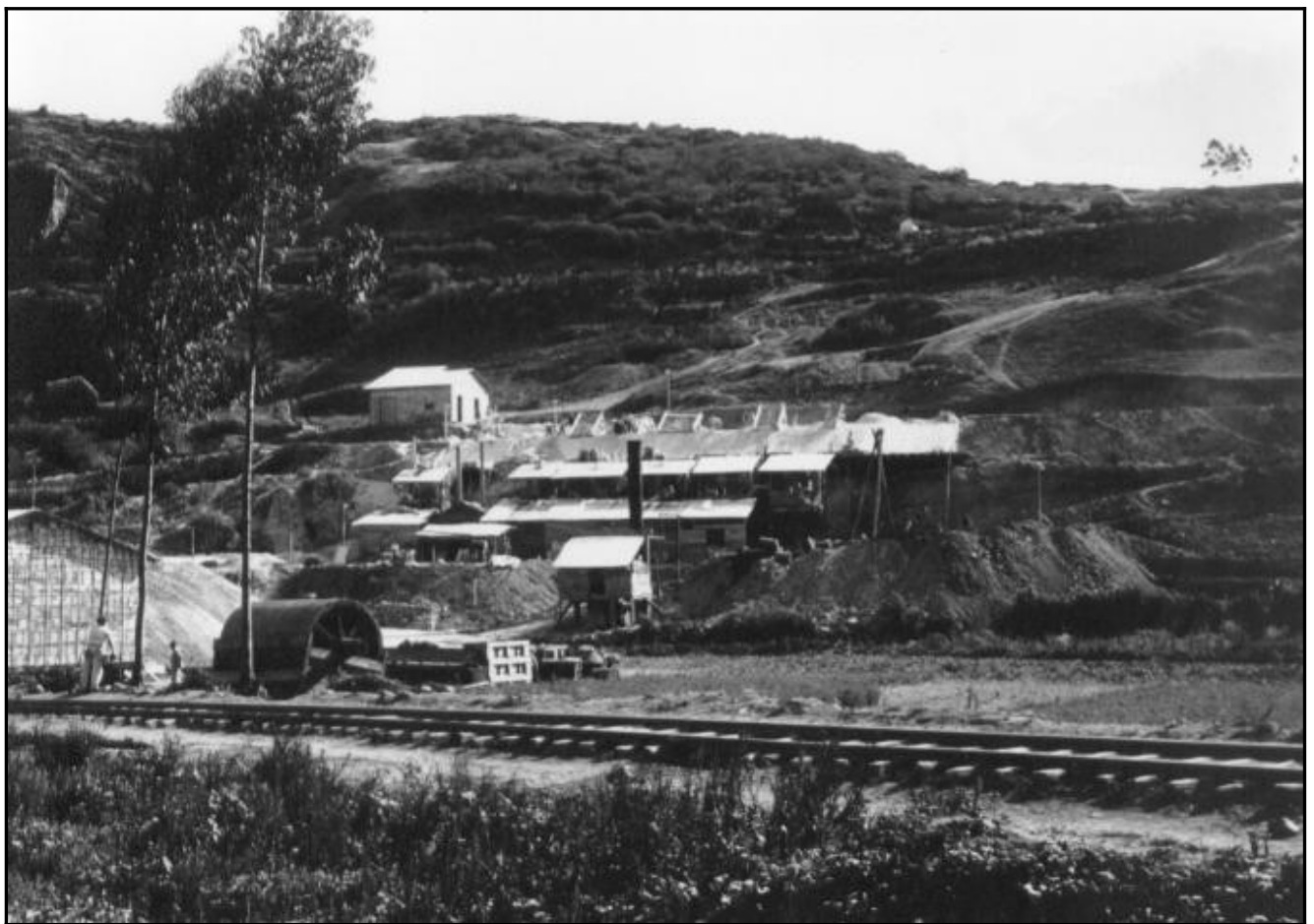
The continued heavy requirement for sulfur resulted in a search for a source that we could control. We learned of large untapped volcanic sulfur deposits in Ecuador and after lengthy and quite protracted investigations decided to acquire mining rights from the Ecuadorian government. The location for the proposed open cast mine was high up in the Andes Mountains, at an altitude of over 5,200 meters, at the foot of Mount Sanga. It was near a town called Riobamba, which had a railway connection north to Quito, the capital city, and west to Ecuador's main port, Guayaquil.

We established our head office in Quito under cousin Gerard (Gerry) Bibb, who was appointed general manager. He spoke Spanish fluently (learned during his years as a political prisoner in Spain) and we acquired a home for him in the residential area of the capital city. Our lawyer and mentor for all things

pertaining to negotiations with the government was Manuel de Guzman who soon formed our local company known as *Compañia Mineras de Asufre*. Manuel and his wife Lucy lived at Cordero y Plaza on the outskirts of Quito and we often enjoyed their hospitality.

Gerry took advantage of the local customs and wallowed in wall-to-wall servants, with a housekeeper, maid, cook, chauffeur and a houseboy called Pedro to look after his bachelor existence. In the morning the chauffeur drove the cook to the market, Gerry to the office and then to the various government departments. Meals in his home were remarkable for the several courses of unappetizing and difficult to digest food. The various strange meats were tough, usually charred over an open fire and the vegetables boiled to death. Desserts were gooey and very sweet, but there were always wonderful local fruits, chirimoya, grapes and superb Colombian coffee. It was freshly made every morning as a concentrate and one simply added boiling water to produce the strength desired.

There was little to do in Quito. Nightlife was non-existent in 1952 and there were hardly any restaurants where one could safely eat without contracting some local tummy bug. Invitations to private homes were the only diversion from the dour and quiet life of the capital city.



Since the actual mine was quite a distance from any populated area, we had to ensure that the large number of miners and workers and their families, would be adequately housed, given medical facilities and their children schooled. The

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altitude was so high that sea level dwellers experienced considerable discomfort until they slowly acclimatized to the rarefied atmosphere with its reduced amount of oxygen. We only employed locals for the actual mining operations, who were native Indians of Inca descendants. Most of them chewed coca leaves, which contained a drug (cocaine) that gave them greater endurance, but also made them more aggressive. The technicians and administrative staff were mostly foreigners that we brought to Ecuador and were sent to lower levels every two weeks to recuperate from the stress of working at the high altitude.

Until we completed a water catchment installation, the native women transported their daily water requirements in large earthenware pots balanced on their shoulders. The 'huts', in which they had lived for generations, often were nothing more than a hole dug in the side of the mountain with a roof consisting of a woven cover to keep out the rain. When a young couple decided to get married, they dug a new hole, not far from their parents and set up housekeeping. The greatest plight in their lives was the problem of obtaining firewood. Branches of the sparse trees often had to be carried great distances and dried grasses and stalks served as important fuel for cooking and heating. While the men sat in the dugouts, the women foraged for sticks and bits of wood and carried them to their 'huts'.

The mining operation consisted of the overburden being removed with large Caterpillar tractors and the sulfur bearing ore crushed and fed into autoclaves. Steam was then introduced into the pressure vessels that melted the sulfur and released it from the ore. The molten pure sulfur was periodically dumped into large concrete settling ponds where it solidified. Later it was broken out with pneumatic hammers, crushed and bagged. The process was quite simple and the quality of the volcanic sulfur was excellent.

Presence of sulfur was determined by using a star drill that brought up a core sample of the mineral bearing soil. The sample determined the advisability of removing the overburden to mine a particular area. The geological exploration was under the control of Dr. Gerhard L. Rüss, an Austrian, who was an experienced geologist.

At the start, three hundred Ecuadorian Indians were employed and trained in the operation of the equipment. The wages were paid in cash after work on Wednesdays since the use of checks and bank accounts had not yet penetrated to the *alto plano* (the high plateau) of the Andes. Within days of the first payment having been made, small lean-tos and huts appeared just outside the mining gate's entrance that sold all sorts of products from meat to a strong local home brew.

The following week after the Wednesday payday, we found to our surprise that only ten percent of the work force showed up on Thursday morning. Half showed up on Friday and the full contingent from Saturday onwards. Our local advisers soon straightened out our thinking. The comparatively huge amount of cash, paid to these previously never employed Andes Indians got only as far as

the mining gates. There it was quickly converted into bottles of very potent liquor. The period of drunkenness depended on the stamina of the miner and only when they had sobered up did they return to work. Most stayed drunk for one or two days. We learned quickly. We almost had a strike on our hands when we suggested fortnightly pay and finally found a simple, but accounting-wise slightly more costly solution, by continuing the weekly wages but staggering the days of payment over the seven days of the week. In this fashion only one seventh of the work force was drunk every day.

Freight access to the mine was by rail only, since there was no road in that part of the high country. We had to lay our own track for the freight trains and it included six switchbacks. The sides of the steep mountains did not allow building curves to gain altitude. The only way to lay the track up the side of the mountain was to make it as steep as the locomotive could pull, then have a switch that led the track back in the opposite direction. The train would steam past the switch, stop and the direction of the switch would be changed to the upper track. The train then reversed up the next section of track. After a kilometer or so, there was another switch that the train would pass, stop and then steam frontward up the next section. In that manner the track and train zigzagged its way up the hill.

The gradient required two locomotives and they were placed one at each end of the short string of freight wagons. The front one would pull and the rear one would push while running backwards. When not in use, our little train was usually parked at the rail yard of Riobamba. A regular train would take our wagons to and from Guayaquil,

Visitors to the mine came by train to Riobamba and then came up on our private railway. There was no telephone but we had a radio that advised us when visitors left Riobamba for the mine. We would then take horses to the stop where the visitors detrained and rode the last six kilometers to the camp. Freight was usually transported on the front end loader of the Caterpillar. Later we cut a simple track and a lorry brought the drums of diesel oil and other material from the track head to the camp and the bagged sulfur from the crushers to the train.

One day when Diana and I were in Quito she complained of a severe pain in her abdomen. The local doctor's diagnosis was quick and clear, appendicitis. An immediate operation was indicated. She entered the *Clinique Pasteur* at Mamacuchara and underwent the successful removal of a burst appendix. Her doctor, José Oswaldo Escudero, had practiced as a plastic surgeon in Buenos Aires and the tiny scar was less than two centimeters long. As a precaution he ordered regular penicillin injections to be given. Unfortunately due to a language misunderstanding triple doses of the injections were administered.

After two days the doctor declared Diana ready for travel and discharged her with great pride. We left almost immediately by car to drive to Riobamba. For the evening a dinner had been arranged by the mayor to welcome us. Unfortunately Diana did not feel well enough to attend, had a poor night and we



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left in the dark, in the early morning hours, on the train for the mine. Two hours later we detrained at the stop where the wagons were uncoupled and the horses patiently waited. By then Diana was very swollen. Her face, hands and arms were almost twice their normal size.

With great difficulty we hoisted her onto one of the horses and then rode slowly up to the camp. She was in great pain, immediately went to bed and Gerry radioed to Quito to contact our mining doctor and instruct him to return as quickly as possible from his furlough. He arrived the following morning. By then Diana had become totally immobile and her entire body had swollen until she looked like the advertisement of the Michelin man. When one touched her skin, circular rings appeared and widened. The doctor took one look at her and asked whether she had received recent penicillin injections? A simple diagnosis: penicillin poisoning. For the next week Diana was fed Jello, more Jello and then more Jello. No other food, some tea, no other liquids. Slowly the poisoning subsided and by the end of the week Diana was well enough to join the rest of the staff at the daily pistol practice. It was an activity that was considered important in view of the continuous danger of the Indians attacking the supervisory staff while inebriated.

Operations at the mine slowly normalized. Diana and I flew to Brazil and Chile and discussed the payment for the sulfur in the form of Letters of Credit with the local banks. The shipments of bagged raw sulfur finally gave our factories, and those of our clients, a guaranteed source of supply.

There was a funny incident with Bosko Babarovic our manager in Chile. We had asked him to come with us to Buenos Aires to explain some technical matters to potential new clients in Argentina. On the flight from Santiago to Buenos Aires we had to make an emergency stop and landed at Mendoza where we stayed over night. Mendoza had a casino and we decided to spend an hour or so at the roulette table. Bosko was on a winning streak and after he had won a hundred thousand pesos (approximately \$US500), Diana 'confiscated' that for safe keeping. We left the casino shortly after with the money and from then on Bosko lost. The next morning we returned the hundred thousand pesos to him, he rushed back to the casino before the plane left, placed the whole amount on one number and of course lost it all.

## ISRAEL

After our first visit to Israel the political situation changed. Palestine evolved into Israel, immigration was wide open and tourists from overseas were made welcome. The political situation between Egypt and Israel also changed considerably, and, as a major investor in Egypt, with numerous visits at all times, it would have been unwise to have an Israeli visa in my passport. Diana and I arrived at Lydda airport in Israel on a British Airways plane from London via Rome on 26 November 1951. We remained in Lydda for negotiations with a

group of potential investors.

We had looked forward to staying at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. However I had been advised not to stay in any hotel in Jerusalem. On 22 July 1946 there had been an attack on the King David Hotel where a bomb had been exploded with 92 people killed and 58 wounded. As a result we stayed at the Tel Aviv Hilton and conducted our business negotiations there. In 1951 the consulates were still in Tel Aviv and but the Embassies were in Jerusalem.

After nearly a month we left Israel on the 20 December with Christmas coming very close. We planned on half a day in Paris, and then in the afternoon went to London, to do any necessary shopping and visit the office in the morning. We had arranged a Canadian ski holiday in the New Year with Henry and Joyce. While in London, we had a wonderful time at Lillywhite's on Trafalgar Square getting fitted out from ski boots to knitted headbands. We left England in the evening and got to New York, via Shannon and Gander, on Christmas Eve at three in the afternoon.

After one day at our respective homes in Scarsdale and New York, Henry and I with our wives emplaned, with great expectation, for the short flight to Montreal and the onward drive to our ski holiday. It was snowing lustily when we arrived at our hotel's ice covered parking lot at Mount Treblanc. Henry turned off the key, stepped out of the car into a frozen depression, twisted his ankle and we all clearly heard the bone break with a loud crack. He pulled his broken foot back into the car and shut the door. We had a short conference and decided to abandon the ski holiday. Henry declared that he could still drive the car, as he would only need his right foot for the brake and accelerator. By the time he had turned the car around he thought better of that decision. When he stopped the car I gingerly made my way around to the driver's side while Henry equally carefully slid over to the passenger seat. I then drove us back to Montreal. We waited for the evening plane and flew back to New York, Henry assuring us repeatedly that the broken ankle did not hurt a bit. The next day the bone was set but had to remain in a cast for a very long time.

It was not quite the ski holiday we had planned.

## **PHILIPPINES**

In 1951 we became interested in finding a new raw material for the production of man-made fibers. Bagasse, the residual material after the sugar juice had been pressed out of sugar cane, had all the qualities required. The Philippines had the residual material so a visit was made in January 1952. We quickly proceeded to set up operations in Manila and initially rented the penthouse suite in the Manila Hotel for my whole family. My parents with Henry and his wife Joyce and Diana and myself made quite a formidable negotiating team.

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Our first association was with the Yulo/Araneta family and we spent many days in negotiations with Jose Yulo, former Philippine Vice President, Speaker of the House and at one time Chief Justice. Jose Yulo's wife Cecilia was the elder sister of Amado Jesus Araneta, "Amading" to his friends and foes alike, one of the Philippines' leading businessmen. His family came from Bacolod, capital of the island Negros Occidental. He had made his fortune during and after the end of the occupation of his country by the Japanese and during the last years of the American occupation of the Philippines. He had supported his country's growth through his involvement in the field of banking, sugar and mining industry, insurance and other business. Amading was married to Ester and they had three children, Judy, Jorge and the teenager, Baby.

When we arrived in Manila, the Aranetas were in the process of finishing their new home, called The White House. It rose behind a three meter high wall, topped by broken glass with automatically opening steel gates and Tommy gun carrying guards. Tom Dugan was his personal bodyguard and responsible for the family's security. He was a former U. S. Navy captain and accompanied Amading to most meetings and checked out the premises before his arrival. Amading had on his estate, a twelve car garage, an Olympic sized swimming pool, a waterfall, a large number of cages in which his fighting cocks were kept and a regulation sized basketball court.

Adjoining the new home was the Araneta Coliseum, which was presented by Amading to the citizens of Manila, designed for sports and amusement extravaganzas. For the official opening he had engaged the Harlem Globetrotters followed by appearances of the band of Xavier Cugat and his famous singer wife Abbie Lane.

On weekends Jose and Cecilia Yulo, their children and grandchildren often visited their country home at Canlubang, near one of Jose's sugar plantations. Canlubang had its own airstrip and in March, April and May 1953 Jose's private plane, a



Stinson, PI-284, picked us up at the Manila Airport in the morning and whisked us across the *barrios* below to their farm. It only took fifteen minutes whereas by car the trip through the crowded streets and villages took almost two hours. The bar-be-ques with numerous pigs being roasted over open fires were a memorable treat.

Amading was also chairman of Elizalde & Co. one of the major factors in the trading and sugar field. The contacts with the sugar industry were of vital importance to us since we would be relying on a continuous and steady supply of bagasse to keep the future factory running. He was a personal friend of President Quirino and we had the pleasure of being invited a few times to Malacañan Palace, the presidential residence. One day the President suggested that we should join him for breakfast on the presidential yacht *APO*. We had been told to wear only the lightest of clothing in the heat of the Manila



spring and felt rather embarrassed later being photographed with the President wearing short sleeved under shirts over our white slacks while he was dressed in a magnificent *barong tagalog* woven of pineapple fibers and beautifully embroidered.

After President Quirino's retirement and the election of General Magsaysay as president of the Philippines, our lawyer Pedring Lopez became very active in his country's politics.

Some months later, while sitting at his dining room table having breakfast, a tall man came in and sat down next to Amading. Introductions were made and pointing at me said that I was Ralph, then pointing at his friend said this is the president. I was still trying to figure out whether he was the president of the sugar mill, the insurance company or maybe even Amading's bank when it became clear from their conversation that he was the just newly elected

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president of the Philippines. Four years later President Magsaysay, accompanied by our friend and solicitor, Pedring Lopez, crashed in the presidential plane on the way to the island of Cebu. The death of the President and most of his entourage became one of the headline stories of the year around the world. Pedring left his widow Massay with several children.

Henry and Joyce decided that they would like to spend some time in the Philippines to assure the proper follow through in connection with the establishment of a new synthetic fiber industry. They arranged for their three boys, Henry junior, Kenneth and Jeffrey, accompanied by Odessa their housekeeper, to come to Manila and rented a lovely home in Forbes Park at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club. My wife and I visited often whenever my business travels took us to countries near the Philippines. This also allowed me to join in the negotiations with the newly established Philippine Rayon Corporation. Progress was steady and preparations for floating the shares to the public advanced at the slow pace common to any new venture in the Philippines. We had employed Rufino Antonio a leading Manila architect to interpret our building drawings into local designs. Delfin Buencamino of the Araneta organization assisted in the administrative functions. The Central Bank of the Philippines became involved as a guarantor of conversion of local into foreign currency. Dindo Gonzales, president of Gonzales Associates, handled our publicity and public relation work. Benny Gaberman, of Gaberman and Hagedorn, dealt with matters pertaining to the stock floatation. Until recently Benny had been president of the Manila Stock Exchange. Our legal work was in the hands of Pedring Lopez, legal adviser to General Magsaysay the president of the Philippines. We became close friends with Pedring and his wife Massay.

There was a funny incident with the brokerage house. I had mentioned that I would like to own some Philippine shares and asked Hagedorn to advise me. He took me to the Manila stock exchange, which in those days consisted of a large room where the few share brokers congregated to conduct their business. On one side of the room was a large blackboard with the names of the 'listed' companies painted on one side, the last quotation entered next and then the number of shares sold. I asked what shares I should buy, but was told to make up my own mind, as "He couldn't recommend any."

I only wanted the share certificate as a souvenir, and intended to buy only a very small amount of the stock. Hagedorn handed me a piece of chalk and suggested that I throw it against the blackboard, and where it hit the board could be my 'buying order'. I threw the piece of chalk, it landed on *Philippine Oil Development Corporation* and I bought one thousand shares at fourteen cents. In due course the certificate arrived at home in White Plains. Much time went by and I never gave the purchase any thought. About ten years later I found the certificate and gave it to my New York broker. To my surprise the shares had actually appreciated and I made a profit of almost ten dollars.

Since a great part of financing for this thirty million dollar venture was expected

to come from the Export Import Bank in Washington, the Export Credit Guarantee Department of London and the Import Export Bank in Tokyo, we required clearance of the United States Mutual Security Agency in the Philippines. We were cleared through R. R. Renne Chief of Mission and their legal counsel Denny Scott. Repeated visits to the American Embassy with Braddock, the Commercial Counselor and even Admiral Spruance, the Ambassador, were just part of the routine necessary to keep the project on a completely legal basis.

Our local bankers were the National City Bank of New York and our main contact was their local vice president Wells Ramon. He was the son of the former president Osmeña of the Philippines and gave us much assistance. Although United States patents covered all our processes and machinery designs, we had to apply for new patent protection in the Philippines. Long hours were required with Tiburcio Evalle, their executive chief examiner. Advertising was handled for us through Adcraft by their president A G Palileo.

Henry's wife, Joyce was a very fine golfer. She played every day at the Wack Wack Club and entered the Philippine Womens Open. The tournament went on for three days and Joyce won First Prize, being presented with her cup at the Sunday evening prize giving. The following day she complained about stiffness of her joints and shortly after became paralyzed. Henry arranged for a doctor to fly from San Francisco to Manila who diagnosed the ailment as polio. On 30 November 1954 Joyce died at the United States Army Hospital in Manila, while in an iron lung. On the insistence of the Philippine government she was cremated.

Diana and I were on a business trip in Japan and Diana flew immediately to Manila to help with the children. Henry decided to return as quickly as possible to New York and after the cremation met me in Tokyo. We left there on 11 December in the new model of Stratocruisers. It was a very somber flight but made quicker by the plane's longer range. We sat in two seats in the first class compartment at the rear of the plane and I shall always remember Henry sitting next to me, holding on his lap the urn containing Joyce's ashes. A few days later Diana brought the children, Henry jr., Kenneth and Jeffrey plus Odessa the housekeeper back to the USA.

## **TAIWAN**

My first visit to Taiwan was on March 10th 1953. I had been in the Philippines from January seventeenth and my brother Henry and I left our wives behind and flew via Laoag, on the northern tip of Luzon, on a Philippine Air Line DC3 to Taipei. We had sent Ted Semoto, the manager of our Osaka office, ahead to set up appointments and to make arrangements for transport and accommodations. In those years so soon after the end of the war, hardly any business people ventured to Taiwan and the very few existing hotels were



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exclusively reserved for the occupying forces. We had certain advantages. Taiwan, formerly known as Formosa, had been occupied by Japan for many decades and most of the older generation spoke Japanese. Our manager's Japanese was fluent and both Henry and I spoke sufficiently Japanese to make ourselves well understood.

Taiwan lies 80 miles off the eastern coast of China, separated by the Formosa Strait. Taipei, its capital, was known as Taihoku under the Japanese. Taipei's population in 1950 was 450,800 out of 2,500,000 in the whole country.

Dr. K. Y. Lin, formerly General Lin of the Chinese army, now the General Manager of Jong-Been Textile Company and a large number of Chinese men and ladies received us at the airport. The latter were from the Central Trust of China the government-established organization that negotiated with foreigners. When they bowed and greeted us for the first time, we could only bow back and hope for later identification. We were then driven from the airport to our hotel. It turned out to be a prewar large residence, named the Friends of China Club, and obviously converted into lodgings for non-military visitors. The Club was under the management of Mr. Jacobs, an American, and our present of two bottles Johnnie Walker Black Label whisky, not only opened doors, but resulted in being assigned three excellent rooms.

Most of our negotiations were with the Jong-Been Textile Company Limited and its vice president Y. T. (Bill) Chao and Y. C. Wang. Also involved were the Taiwan Cotton Mill and Machine Works, the Taiwan Sugar Corporation's vice president J. C. Huang and the Taipei Cotton Mills' Stanley C. Chi. In later years the United States Embassies' commercial attachés were happy to assist American companies to enter into business relationship with local organizations. In 1953 help was almost non-existent. We were fortunate that Mr Sponsler, Division Chief of the United States Mutual Security Agency, had received a request from Washington to assist us in our negotiations. Visits to Taipei became a regular feature of my life and when I visited Taiwan for the last time in May 1975, it was my thirty third visit in the, by then, much modernized former Island of Formosa.

After the early stays at the FOCC, we received permission from the American military authorities to stay at the Grand Hotel. Madame Chang Kai Chek owned this magnificent group of buildings. It was built in the old Chinese style with gold and red lacquer pillars, moon gates and carved wooden partitions. The rooms were huge, each with a balcony overlooking the hotel gardens.

One of the hotel's services included, of course, a barbershop. The Grand Hotel's was truly outstanding. To have a haircut also meant a shampoo, scalp massage, a trim of the hairs in ones ears and nostrils, a delightful pounding and rubbing of your back, a gentle massage of hands and the polishing of shoes. How could such service be resisted, especially as it cost less than one US dollar.

A short distance from the hotel flows the Tan-Shui Ho River. Formerly

navigable, it silted up long ago and a sandbar now fronts its entrance. Many bridges have made traffic on the river impossible except for low, shallow-draft boats. By the 1960's there were a number of fine restaurants on its banks. One of our favorite places was the *Mongolian Barbeque*.

This restaurant, only newly opened in Taiwan in the sixties, had large buffet tables with the food displayed for self-service. These included iced, paper thin slices of beef, pork, lamb, chicken and liver, with bowls of carrots, onions, cauliflower, broccoli, tomatoes, all cut into small bite size pieces. Two enormous steel griddles dominated the middle of the restaurant. You selected a deep bowl, filled it with the finely sliced meat and chicken, adding to it the pieces of vegetables and a variety of sauces, consisting of soyabean, spicy shrimp, red hot chili pepper, vinegar, pineapple, sesame oil and other ingredients. After handing the full bowl to the cook, he emptied it on the red-hot griddle that, in a matter of moments, cooked the finely sliced ingredients. The cook then skillfully propelled them back into the bowl by means of a pair of long chopsticks. The dish, tasting of the mixture of the different sauces, meats and vegetables is then stuffed into small pockets of special bread and was definitely a new experience and culinary delight. Another of its great successes was the invitation to return and refill ones bowl any number of times.

Our business discussions seemed to continue endlessly. Dr K. Y. Lin was made the president of New Taiwan Products Company that manufactured carpets with wool supplied from New Zealand. After protracted negotiations and research as to availability of labor, water and the disposal of effluents, we finally decided that the rayon factory be located at Towfen, a small town to the south of the capital. We appointed Joe van der Weghe, a Dutchman, as project manager. The company was named China Man-Made Fiber Corporation and still operates with much success today. The von Kohorn family, following our normal procedure, took a major position in the ownership of the company. When we ultimately signed the agreement with our clients we were indeed proud to have been only the second foreign company to become investors in Taiwan's newly burgeoning industrial development.

One amusing incident will always remain with me. During the initial discussions with the Government in the late forties, my brother and I had a lengthy talk with the Minister of Finance at his office in the Ministry. During the meeting air raid sirens suddenly started howling. Very calmly the minister got up and asked us to follow him into the air raid cellar beneath the ministry. We trailed down behind him and, minutes later, sat on long benches in the shelter, the minister directing us to sit at his right and left. As soon as we had settled down he turned to my brother and, totally disregarding the precarious situation, asked in continuation of what had preceded our flight into the cellar:

"You had agreed to a major investment in Taiwan. What will be the details and extent of such an American participation?" Henry looked at me, raised his eyes and shaking his head a little replied:

"Minister, would you mind very much discussing our investment in Taiwan

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after the air raid is over?"

Mainland China, from time to time, decided to flex her muscles a little and had sent bombers over Taiwan. Fortunately not to drop bombs but leaflets, exhorting the population to revolt against the American imperialists. A little later the air raid siren sounded the all clear.

The photograph shows General Lin in the centre next to myself.

During the early days of our negotiations in Taipei, we learned of the famous red light district at Grass Mountain, near the capital. A remnant of the military days, this small township, with health giving hot water baths and many restaurants and hotels, was famous for the young ladies available to the visitors. The Taiwanese geisha houses, having created their own system, were similar to those of Japan, but with the influx of American troops had developed their own style. The normal procedure was to visit one of the restaurants and have the proprietress call a number of the young 'flower girls' for inspection. They usually arrived, two or three at a time, in a rickshaw, dressed in lovely cheongsams, slit to the waist. Once a selection had been made, the chosen girl would stay and assist in serving food and pouring rice wine. The girls not selected would return to their *mama-san* and await another call. With life becoming more modern, the days of rickshaws were numbered and small motorbikes replaced the former man-propelled vehicles. One simply advised the restaurant of ones desires. Young or experienced, short or tall, thin or well stacked. After a quick telephone call a scooter usually delivered two or three



girls for inspection, the discarded ones returning immediately.

The restaurant/hotels had bedrooms and suites, most with ofuro (hot water baths). When dinner was complete a bath and a massage followed and be

further entertained by the ladies as required all in one establishment. The 'Grass Mountain' system became famous among the occupation troops and continued until the sixties when new regulations restricted this marketing of girls.

Our offices were on Nanking Road and had been selected after a lengthy study by a geomancer who had determined the most favorable location. He assured us that it would receive 'number one auspicious *chi*, cosmic breath'. However, he recommended that we seal off one of the rooms to assure the greatest *fung shui*, good luck and prevent money and finances departing through its windows.

## **TYPHOON IN PHILIPPINE WATERS**

Extensive business during the early Fifties required our repeated presence in the Philippines and Diana and I decided to take up residence in Manila for several months.

Amading, our local associate, was involved in many varied undertakings. His business trips often took him to the numerous islands that make up the Philippine archipelago. To simplify his travels and make him independent of airline schedules, he had acquired the ocean going yacht called *Natividad*. The yacht was normally moored in the harbor of the Manila Yacht Club and looked after by a captain and permanent crew of eight. The ship formerly belonged to one of the Wilmington DuPonts and had crossed the Pacific under her own power. *Natividad* was over 35 meters long and about three hundred tons. Magnificently appointed, she cruised at ten knots and was equipped with all modern navigational refinements then in use.

In April 1953 it was necessary for us to visit Bacolod, the provincial capital of Negros Occidental, to obtain some aerial photos of the extent of the sugar cane plantings. Our associate suggested that we might like to accompany him on his yacht to the island. The trip should take less than two days and we could enjoy some of the fabulous Inland Sea cruising.

Our departure had been planned for the early morning and Amading's Cadillac waited in front of the Manila Hotel to take us to the yacht club in Malate. When we arrived at the gate the armed guard recognized the car, waved us past and we proceeded to the main jetty where *Natividad* was moored.

Amading arrived shortly after in his Rolls Royce. He had purchased the armored car from the dethroned Egyptian King Farouk's sequestered estate and it was his pride and joy. He was dressed in white slacks and a beautiful barong tagalog woven from pineapple fibers. As usual, his white naval cap with heavy gold braid was jauntily pushed back on his head and he hugged us before we followed him up the gangway.

"We will have a wonderful day and can relax all the way. The captain told me that the weather forecast is excellent and the small typhoon over Hong



## Cellulose to Cell Phones

Kong will not reach the Philippines for at least three days.”

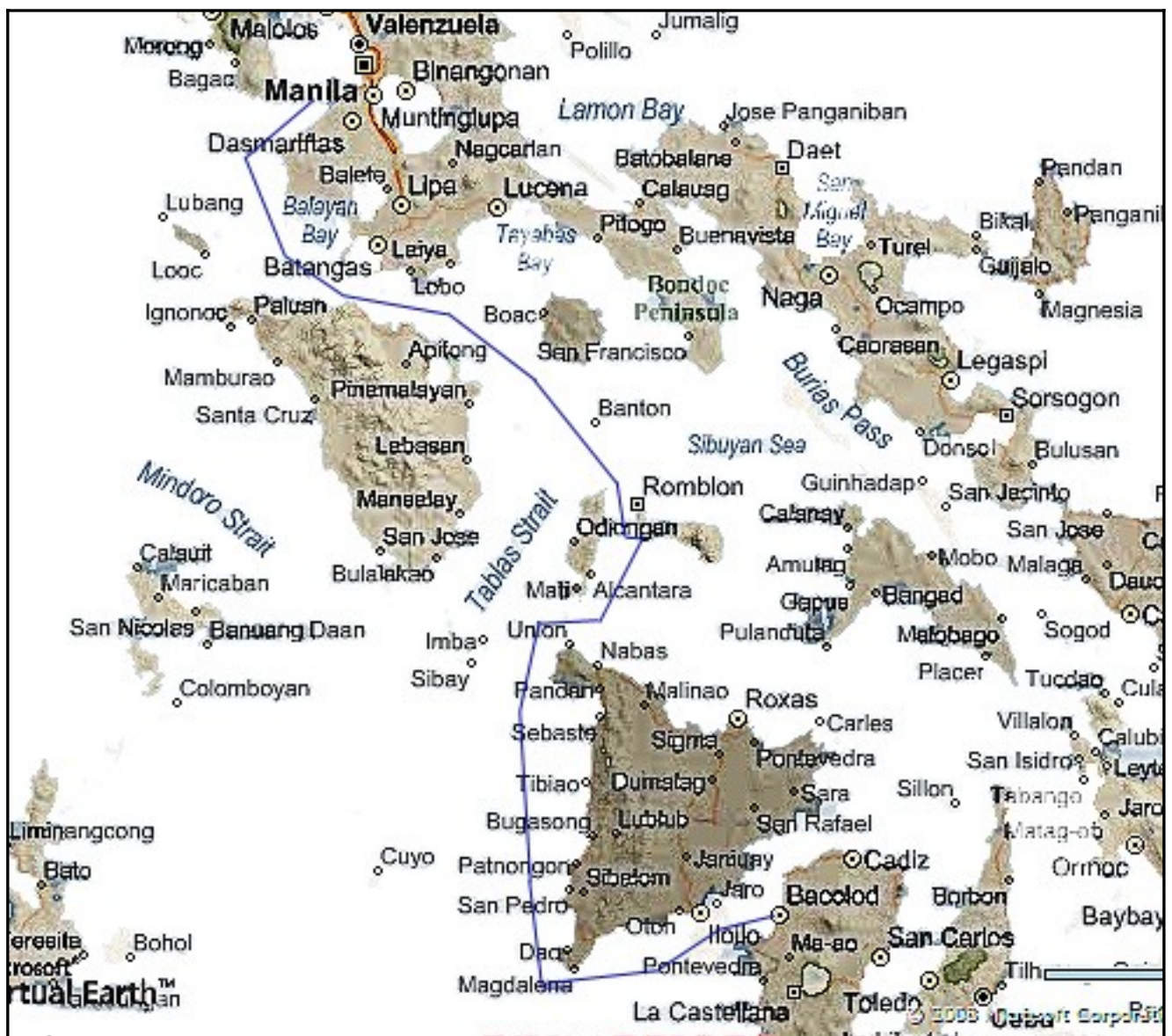
We were certainly glad to hear this news from Amading. The newspapers had written of the destruction caused by the strong winds preceding the low and in spite of my love for cruising at any time, I do prefer traveling under calm and pleasant conditions if it is possible.

“We are really looking forward to this trip,” I replied. “Will you please give instructions to your captain that I be permitted on the bridge at anytime.”

“Certainly. You can have the run of the ship at all times and I hope that you will enjoy yourself.”

Since most of the cruise would be by coastal navigation, with land in sight at all times, I was keen to follow our progress through the Philippine Sea on the charts and to pencil in the course we were to take. I had borrowed the charts from the yacht club office the day before and had laid the course I thought we would travel.

All preparations for our trip having been made by the crew during the night and early in the morning it now only needed Amading's approval and the ship was ready to cast off.



We walked leisurely to the fantail and sat at a large round table of woven bamboo enjoying freshly squeezed calamansi juice, while a sailor rolled the sunscreen over the afterdeck. The captain approached Amading diffidently and spoke to him in Tagalog.

"You can cast off anytime," came Amading's order in English.

The captain left and a few minutes later we heard the ship's horn give three short blasts and felt *Natividad* slowly pull away from the jetty. She had to go astern a short way since the length of the ship made a direct turn past other boats difficult. The captain, a former naval officer, handled the vessel with ease and showed his experience with the craft. The stern swung smoothly around and soon we were heading for the opening between the breakwaters and passed from the yacht basin into the South Harbor and then into Manila Bay.

The sun was behind us and although still early in the forenoon, the heat was already oppressive on the afterdeck. I excused myself and went forward to the bridge. The captain was busy checking that all gear had been stowed properly and when he returned to the bridge showed me the courses we would travel subject to the wishes of the owner. He had worked out several alternatives and explained that it was quite usual to be told to proceed first on one course and then have several course changes made while en route. I was invited to settle down on the high captain's chair on the bridge and with a pair of binoculars watched the city of Manila slowly recede. To port lay Bacoar Bay, formed by the Cavite City peninsula that was the former U. S. Airbase at Sangley Point. Although our draft was less than three meters the captain stood well clear of the San Nicolas Shoals and kept outside the twenty-meter line.

Before us lay the island of Corregidor. How much history that place had seen. It had served as a lighthouse station since 1835 with the light visible for 33 miles. In later years it became a fortress, first for the Spanish and then for the Americans. Already years before the Second World War Corregidor had been envisaged as the rear guardian of a Filipino and American army battling on Bataan, only two miles away. It carried the heaviest guns and mortars and was one of the United States prime defensive outposts in the Philippines. When General MacArthur was ordered by President Roosevelt to leave this island he made his famous statement to General Moore, "Keep the flag flying. I am coming back."

On May 6th 1942 General Wainwright IV surrendered the island to General Homma of the Imperial Japanese Forces. Colonel Jones recaptured it on March 2nd 1945. This island, on which more than ten thousand Filipinos, Americans and Japanese had given their lives, consists of only 1735 acres.

We left it to starboard and headed through the South Channel. The captain gave short orders to the helmsman and from time to time called his instructions down through a speaking tube to the engine room. His commands were usually acknowledged by the clanking of a bell and quite noticeable to me by the change in the engine sound. Since all conversation was in Tagalog, I could



## Cellulose to Cell Phones

only assume the results matched his orders.

Our course was 220 degrees and soon we passed Limbones Island off Limit Point. There the captain ordered a course change to run down the coast of West Luzon to the Calavite Passage. Fortune Island passed to starboard and behind it we saw the high peaks of Ambil and Lubang islands. Mindoro lay straight ahead and I watched the echo sounder recording greater and greater depth. Since no one took much notice of me I left the bridge.

After several hours of cruising the sky took on a decidedly ominous color. *Natividad* had a powerful radio and had been in touch with the Filipino Air Force base to collect the latest 'met' data. The weather was rapidly breaking up and the typhoon was approaching the Philippine Islands earlier than expected with increasing speed.

I had returned to the bridge and the captain showed me on the general area chart the latest reported position of the tropical storm and its predicted path. If it continued we would be clear of its approach and at worst run into some of the winds more than a hundred miles off its center and predicted at no more than thirty knots. The center was reported to carry wind speeds between 120 and 150 knots.

"I will check with Mr. Araneta and see what his orders are," said the captain and we both went down to the large saloon where a buffet-style luncheon had been laid.

"Proceed on the safest course," were the instructions, and the captain withdrew leaving Diana and I to lunch in lonely splendor.

Amading was a strange mixture of a man. He was in his late forties, of average height with sparse hair clipped short. Two particular things stood out about his personal hygiene. Because of the heat in the tropics he showered several times a day and always smelled of talcum powder and cologne. His face was always shiny and smooth as his personal valet shaved him twice a day.

Except when we met outside the Philippines, I never saw Amading in a suit or jacket. He wore the most exquisitely woven pineapple fiber shirts that had to be hand laundered after each wearing, and on some days we counted five changes. He had more than fifty pairs of shoes in his dressing room at home, all polished to a glossy shine and kept in perfect shape on wooden lasts carved to the mould of his feet.

His wife Ester and children Judy, George and Baby lived in equal splendor, but always overshadowed by the strength of his personality which was Amading's most obvious characteristic.

Amading did everything in great style and with much panache. He chartered a twenty-eight-passenger airplane to take twenty handlers each carrying and massaging a fighting cock on their laps from Manila to Cebu City. There they participated in a local cockfight with Amading betting thousands of pesos on the outcome of each fight. He brought the Harlem Globetrotters to Manila to play

an exhibition game in the Araneta Colloseum and to practise on his private basketball court.

His collection of cars included the latest Cadillac and Mercedes limousines and a Ferrari with a speed reportedly of over 200 mph. Several smaller cars were all constantly in use by members of the family, houseguests and friends. Over forty servants lived and worked on the premises and kept the magnificent residence, The White House, and surrounding gardens and park in immaculate condition.

*Natividad* was fitted out in corresponding style. The sumptuous master suite had one wall running athwart ships consisting of the entrance door in the center and walk-in closets on both sides. The entire wall was covered with blue tinted mirrors. With the door closed the tiles reflected the cabin and the empire-size bed in the middle. Above the bed was a round skylight that permitted Amading and Ester to watch the clouds move past while they were resting during the day or the stars before going to sleep.

The dining saloon was typical of the opulence. Beneath the windows that looked out on the decks were large built-in cabinets. Displayed silver services were cunningly held in place by concealed clasps and catches. Even in heavy seas, they remained motionless, as we were to later discover. The table could seat twelve guests plus host and hostess at each end. The lounge had massive divans and chairs anchored to the deck and silky oriental rugs were scattered over thick wall-to-wall carpets dampening any engine noises. Heavy brass pots held a profusion of fresh flowers that gave off a fragrance that did not concur with my concept of how a ship should smell.

The staterooms and main living areas were air conditioned and curtained to keep out the sun and light reflected from the sea. *Natividad* had been built before the Second World War. She was beautifully finished and the exotic woods gleamed from the care lavished on her by her owners. The bridge was equally well kept. All brass shone and the linoleum decking was polished to a high (and very dangerously slippery) gloss. The crew were dressed in white uniforms with the sailors in U S Navy type 'sailor suits'. The captain wore his four gold stripes on the sleeves of his officer's coat and never removed his cap, even after the many hours he would spend on the bridge during the coming storm.

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"I will change course to stay north of Mindoro and go through the Verde Island passage," the captain explained to me. "The tropical storm is approaching from the south-west and we will be more protected than if we go through the Calavite Passage and down the west coast of Mindoro as I had planned. Mr. Araneta has ordered me to take the safest course and once we are east of Mindoro Island we will be in its lee and can find good shelter if needed."



It was late afternoon when we approached Verde Island and as soon as we were clear of the South Pass turned and headed for Tablas Strait. These were the days before global positioning systems. With his dividers the captain stepped off our distance from the shore on the chart. Near Calapan Point the off-lying islands are a bit of a hazard and he made sure that we were clear. The echo sounder allowed him to establish a good position and visibility was still excellent. But our distance offshore had its disadvantage. While close in we were protected from the wind, further out we felt the increased strength of the blow for the first time. The barograph, which had recorded a fairly straight horizontal line since we left, started to show the steady drop that precedes a major atmospheric disturbance. The anemometer showed a wind speed of 25 to 30 knots and the sea started to build up on the starboard bow.

*Natividad* had two short masts that carried navigational equipment and a radio antenna stretched between them. As the force of the wind increased the wire whipped from side to side and several times the captain looked up with a worried glance. It was now after eight a clock and the steward came looking for me to join my wife and Amading for dinner. The walk to the main lounge

consisted of bouncing from one side of the companionway to the other. By the time we sat down to dinner the sea had become too rough to be able to eat at the table. I watched with amazement when the ship lurched or shuddered and the silver services and other decorations remained as if glued to their shelves.

Amading became increasingly nervous. He stared at the liver spots on his hands and then began rubbing them. Finally he called for the captain. Now the polite conversation in English was dropped and they started to talk rapidly in Tagalog. When the captain left I excused myself, took a few pieces of fruit with me to munch in the wheelhouse and explained that I wanted to spend the night on the bridge to watch the tropical storm develop. I certainly intended to wait out the passing of the depression there.

This storm definitely had not come up suddenly. There had been a steady increase of wind and sea. The barometer stood at 28.8, the closest to the bottom of the scale that I had seen. The small ink-filled pen of the barograph banged so much it made short up and down lines on the paper around the drum. I watched the delicate wood and glass-cased instrument with disbelief as it was tossed unmercifully in the hanger in which it was suspended. The wind speed was now close to 50 knots and a brilliant moon kept on appearing through the scudding clouds and illuminated a large island to starboard. Squalls of considerable intensity passed overhead and sometimes we were almost uncontrollably driven down the face of waves. Even inside we could hear the wind howling in the mast supports. Later, when I saw the records of the storm I learned that it had reached 12 on the Beaufort scale, wind speeds in excess of 75 miles per hour. At times it felt as if we were standing on end and then we would suddenly slew sharply to port or starboard. Each time *Natividad* would shrug off cascades of water and the most awesome movement would pass through the ship when her stern became exposed and her two big propellers churned in midair. Even at that stage the captain appeared quite calm and in complete control.

"These tropical storms never last very long. We are heading through it and at our speed should be clear in an hour or so."

One of the orders Amading had given to the captain was to contact Manila by radio and let our destination know that our arrival might be delayed. The captain now turned to the operator in the radio room astern of the bridge and gave instructions to send the requested message. The operator, not at his happiest in this rough sea, had previously been listening to other ships reporting the weather. When he ceased to hear any other vessels he selected the main calling frequency to get his message on the air. I stood behind the captain in the doorway holding on to the handrail and watched while we waited for the acknowledgment. The operator's call became more and more urgent. There was no reply.

"Manila Radio, Manila Radio, Manila Radio. This is *Natividad* calling Manila Radio. Over."

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The call went out every 30 seconds for more than five minutes. No answer. The reason soon became obvious. All valves were operating, the set had been on stand-by since we had left the yacht basin and had operated well three hours before. The meter on the set showed that we were transmitting with full power. The captain pushed the door open and went out on deck. I remembered his previous worried glances at the antenna. The wind had turned into a howling banshee. The stays and halyards were screaming. There was a thrashing of wire across the deck. What all of us had feared had obviously happened. The radio was transmitting, but there was no antenna. The storm had torn the aerial wire from the insulator on the foremast and it was whipped back and forth as it hung down from the mainmast.

I rushed out on deck and grabbed hold of the wire. Fortunately the operator was not transmitting or I would have received a bad burn in my rash impetuosity. The wind tore at the antenna but I had a good grip on it and tied it to the bottom of the mainmast. At least the thrashing had stopped. Once outside on deck the sight and sound was awe-inspiring. The sea had built up to a young typhoon and I thought of the meteorological forecast that had promised its passage to the west of us in two days time. It seemed right on top of us. I was wet right through but fortunately the water and rain were lukewarm.

The captain was not impressed with my action. He had been scared out of his wits that I could have been washed overboard. He berated me but finally agreed that I had handled the situation properly. Back on the bridge the situation was no less worrisome. Our speed was now down to five knots and we were quartering the waves so *Natividad* yawed and she rolled. I wondered if we would broach. I had experienced severe seas in smaller crafts, but to undergo this sort of motion in a comparatively large vessel was not only a new experience, but also a decidedly disagreeable one.

I admire the helmsmen who stood watch, two on, four off, and held *Natividad* on course throughout the storm.

Although there was no let-up, the barometer started to climb and the anemometer showed a drop in the wind speed. By 5.00 a. m. the wind speed was down to 25 knots. I received the captain's permission to go out on deck and, with visibility returning in the early dawn, took a good look at the damaged aerial. The break had come near the insulator that was raised to its position by a wire halyard on the foremast. I lowered the insulator and brought the torn antenna wire from the mainmast forward. It was simple enough to join the two wires with a square knot and hoist the insulator back up the mast. I saw the faces of the captain and helmsman peer out at me through the window on the bridge and felt like the savior of the fleet. The bow of *Natividad* still dipped deep into the waves and threw water over the deck. The storm continued to abate and by the time I had finished with my meritorious attempts, conditions were decidedly beginning to return to normal.

Back on the bridge the captain praised me for the work and I stood next to him while we watched the radio operator try out the set.

*"Natividad, Natividad, Natividad.* This is Manila calling do you copy?" We heard all right but our radio still did not transmit. There was little that could be done. The captain pointed out our position to me on the chart. We were off Simara Island and could see Corcuera Point to port. A little later we heard an airplane engine. It seemed to be buzzing us and we went out on deck. A small scout plane with Philippine Air force markings headed straight for us and wiggled its wings. We waved back and it went into a steep climb. When it returned it flew almost at deck level and when just alongside a small package was dropped only a few meters from our port beam.

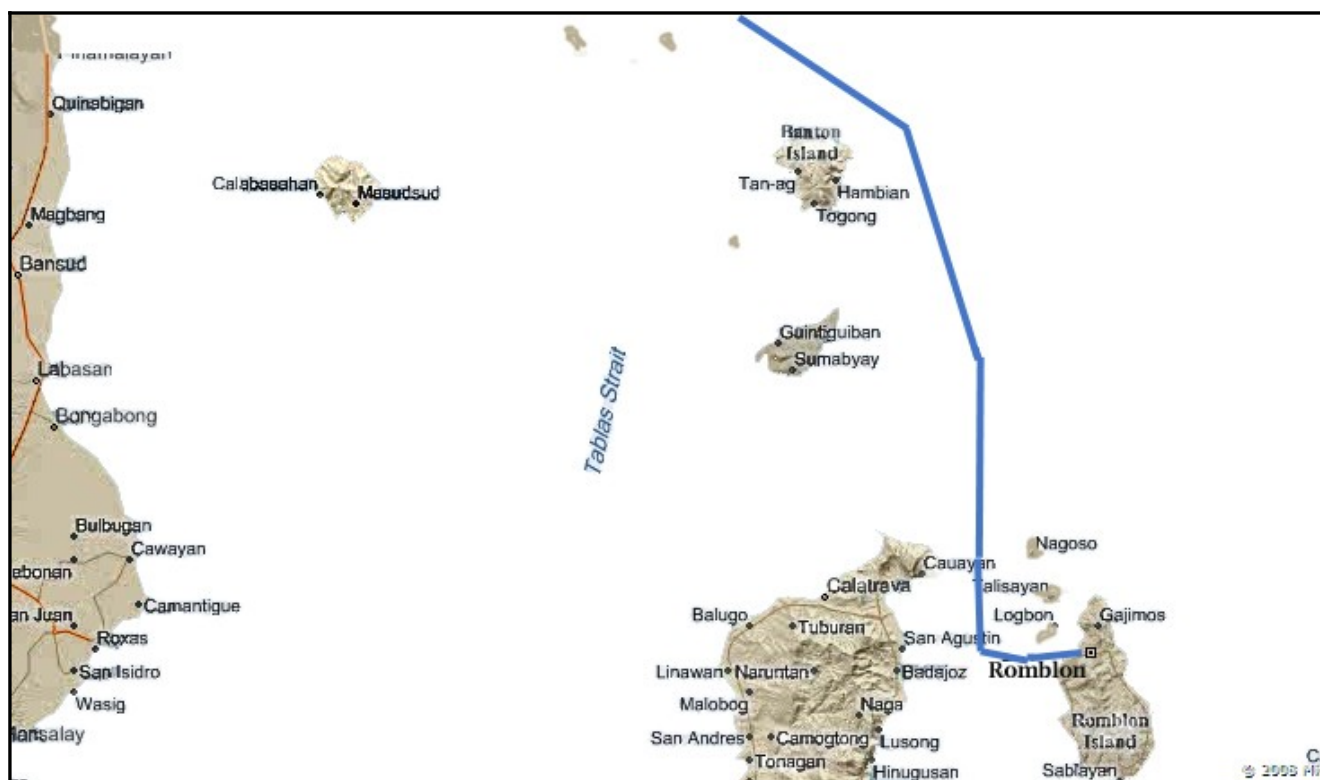
The captain ordered the ship to slow down and headed in a turn back to where the parcel was bobbing in the water. A sailor picked it out of the water with a long boat hook. Inside was a short scribbled message. In view of our calculated position in the typhoon a request had been made to the air force to mount a search for our ship. Now that they had found us they wished us a pleasant trip.

The message was taken below to Amading and a little while later the order came back. "Head for Romblon Island, wait until the sea is completely calm and fix the radio."

During the night I had never felt a moment of fear for our lives but our host had not enjoyed this weather at all. He told us later that there were times when he had doubts that we would live through the night.

Romblon is a small island that has become famous for its fine quality of marble. The mine had a strong wharf in Romblon bay and this was the one we were to head for. It is a tricky entrance into the harbor and *Natividad* headed slowly past Gorda Point then south, with Cobrador and Alad islands to port. Once south of Alad the captain gave orders to proceed dead slow and we steamed through the narrow passage with Lugbung Island heading for the port. We were greeted by the most wonderful scent of frangipani and bougainvillea. We enjoyed those fragrances first at Romblon and later again as we approached Bacolod.





It was just before ten o'clock when we had the port and starboard markers abeam and made for the calm of the sheltered wharf. The odors of the island were strong and the heat of the day already made steam rise from foliage that had been saturated in the night's downpour.

As soon as we docked I went below to wash and changed into white slacks and barong tagalog. Diana and I then joined Amading to go ashore. Arrangements were already under way to get the radio back into operation and while we visited the mine's office the ship was cleaned. We had a marvelous time looking at all sorts of items made of marble, such as ashtrays, cigarette boxes, bowls and vases and were able to buy several items at unbelievably low prices.

Amading had invited the manager of the marble mine to come aboard *Natividad* and have lunch with us. We helped ourselves from the sideboard laden with food. There was sinigang (a sort of bouillabaisse), tinolang bangus (a fish dish), estofado (some kind of braised beef), quilowan (liver pieces in port wine), chunks of roast suckling pig and caramel custard. All followed by bowls of fruit, fresh juices and coffee.

After several weeks in the Philippines, I was used to the way huge quantities of food were served at the household's table. All the unused food went to the servants. The more servants and staff, the more food appeared at the owner's table. With the ship's numerous crew, the amount of food on the table was correspondingly large. Filipino hospitality is also legendary and the fact that we were aboard a ship did not alter this wonderful trait.

The manager explained to us that the strong winds from typhoons accompanied by deluges of rains sometimes struck the island, snatching away tin roofs. Strangely they had little influence on nipa huts, their palm leaf roofs standing up against the highest force of wind, bending and flexing but seldom with any damage.

We left the Romblon wharf at exactly three o'clock heading out of the bay between Lugbung and Bangud islands, and then straight south across the Sibuyan Sea. The water had turned a glorious blue and the crew continued cleaning above and below deck. Two sailors were polishing the brass that had lost some of its sheen. The captain explained that the most interesting part of the trip was now before us and that we would wind our way through dozens of small islets until we reached Negros Occidental. The distance from Romblon to Bacolod is between 175 and 200 miles, depending on the course followed, and he expected to dock the next morning at eight o'clock.



The Sibuyan Sea is almost totally enclosed by islands. To the north was Sibuyan and Romblon, to the west by Tablas and Karabao, to the south Panay and to the east Masbate. The captain had the option of heading for the Hintotolo Channel or the Sulu Sea. Hintotolo Channel has a tremendous number of smaller islands and shallows, most fearsome to a stranger to these waters and in particular at night. The Captain chose the route via the Sulu Sea. There was a pass between Karabao and Borocay islands followed by a run down the west coast of Panay. After rounding Naso Point we went through the Gulf of Panay and the Guimaras Strait to Bacolod. He used the detailed chart to show me the proposed route that was twenty-five miles longer, but eliminated the dangers of the

shallows. Since we would have been in the most hazardous area during dark that was a wise decision. Our course would bring us to the narrows early in the morning when visibility would make the passage comparatively easy.

Mid afternoon we entered the top of the Sulu Sea and headed south. Mount Baloy, almost 1600 meters high was visible from all sides. During our progress we watched it slowly move from dead ahead around our port side, stay with us during the night, and next morning when we were heading north, it was still to port.

After all the excitement of the previous night I was tired and we had gone to sleep fairly early. I woke at about midnight and sneaked out of our cabin onto deck. The bright moon reflected on the very calm waters and I saw group

## Cellulose to Cell Phones

flashes from the Nogas Island light. We had already turned and were hissing due east with the bow of *Natividad* slicing easily through the phosphorescent sea. Having made sure that we were not about to run into any icebergs or collide with the Queen Mary, I toddled off back to bed.

Shortly after five o'clock I went again on deck and watched *Natividad* pass between Guiuanon Island and Toyo Reef. I then returned to shower and get ready for the day. By the time I was back on deck we had Inampulugan and its small sister islands to port and followed a number of black buoys north. Negros Occidental extended to our starboard and we now noticed for the first time its endless sugar plantations running off as far as we could see. With Pandan Point approaching we were not far away from our final destination.

We had an early breakfast on the aft deck and watched the lush green of the land pass to starboard. Here too was a high peak that stood out above all others. The volcano Canlaon is less than 2,500 meters high and, with the typical conical shape, dominated the surrounding countryside. The radio operator, with his now perfectly functioning set, had confirmed our arrival and we were expected to dock precisely at eight o'clock. The wharf at Bacolod is designed to handle the large bulk sugar carriers and the captain had little problem bringing *Natividad* alongside.

Bacolod was the birthplace of the Aranetas and half the town's population was at the dock to see its famous local son arrive with his yacht. We went ashore and found an air conditioned Buick waiting to take us to Amading's guesthouse. It was a tranquil arrival after a tumultuous journey. The first sight pointed out to us was that of carabaos grazing placidly along the town's outskirts. The Philippine water buffalo is a completely domesticated animal, helping to plow fields, raise water from deep wells and is the major source of meat in the islands. We flew back to Manilla rather than using *Natividad*.

## INDIA AND PAKISTAN

On 24 November 1953 I set out to prepare a submission for a client in Travancore, with Jean Duplant. I flew from Bombay to Belgaum and then on to Mangalore. From there we took a car and driver to take us to Rayonpuram in Kerala State. After a while we came to a river, which was usually forded by car, but the stream was in flood and was impossible to cross. At the ford were a number of elephants usually engaged in transporting logs from the forest to the road. Duplant talked to the man in charge and, after much haggling, arranged for us to be taken through the river on the elephants' backs and a message to be sent to have a taxi wait for us on the other bank.

Most visitors to India only take photographs of elephants. These animals were working beasts and well trained by their *mahouts* to handle the hauling of timber. He used his pointed stick to make the elephant raise his front left leg, made me stand on the leg that lifted me up until I could pull myself up onto the head. I did not have to be told to hold on to the wide leather girth, normally used to fasten ropes. I hung on for dear life but soon settled down. My natural reaction was to pat the elephant but was told to slap the skin because it is so thick. I slapped my hand hard down on the head and felt dozens of needles penetrate my thin skin. The animal's hair was as tough as wire and, to the great amusement of the mahouts, who watched my antics with much shouting and laughter. I wound up with a bleeding hand.

Duplant and I crossed the river without any further incident but had to wait almost three hours before an old taxi picked us up on the other side.

After completing the submission on 1 December, we left by car, bypassing the river and returned to Bombay by air via Cochin. The visit was worthwhile and we supplied machinery and management to our clients in Travancore. An amusing incident happened at the guesthouse in Travancore. Our engineer Herr Hammer had a rather bossy wife. Their house was located slightly above the local river. Mrs. Hammer had been quietly sitting in the sun on the lawn behind their home. Stealthily a crocodile left the river to also lie in the sun and came towards Mrs Hammer's chair. The poor woman practically had a heart attack, and when her husband returned from the office demanded to immediately return to Austria. He arranged that and remained in India for about another two years. Fortunately problems with our staff were rare.

On another occasion we visited the Nilgiri hills. We flew by plane to Coimbatore and then took a hire car to Ootacamund. We had specially gone there to see one of the last surviving places where the British Raj had come to play in the past. We also wanted to look at one of the nearby Toda villages. The Todas are an aboriginal polyandrous tribe living in small huts, with the entrance door low to the ground. Entry is only possible by squatting and crawling through the small opening. Not only are Toda men polygamous but Toda women also

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practice polyandry (they have several husbands). When a Toda woman marries a man, she also marries his brothers and cousins. They practice a strange religion that revolves around the care and veneration of a type of long horned white buffalo that may only be tended by men.

When we negotiated with a client in East Pakistan (Bangladesh) our first talks were in Dacca. In spite of its rapidly growing population caused by the flight of many Muslims from nearby Calcutta, Dacca was more a village than small city. Our client's name was Ahmedbhoy. That was his whole name, not his first or last name. His passport and visas, all were made out in just this one name. Duplant and I had flown from Bombay to Calcutta and then on to Dacca on 6 May 1954. We stayed at Hotel *Shanbagh* and the lack of air conditioning made life in this tropical port rather unpleasant. Ahmedbhoy was a member of the Dacca Golf Club and insisted that, to get some exercise, he and I should play a round very early every morning before the temperature climbed into the mid forties.

The club had two distinguishing features. The first was the eight hole course. There used to be nine holes, but the government had decided to convert one of the nine holes into a cattle grazing ground. The second feature was the flocks of birds, similar to crows, who had a penchant for stealing golf balls. The only way to finish a hole without having the ball carried off was to have two caddies. One to run ahead to where he thought your ball would land, then rush to it and cover it with a red rag. The player would then walk up to the ball, number two caddy would remove the rag, number one caddy would go ahead, the next shot was played and then the whole performance would be repeated.

Ahmedbhoy gave a magnificent reception at the Dacca Club in my honor. In spite of the heat, we were expected to dress in black tie, with the ubiquitous *monkey jacket*, a short heavily starched white dinner jacket. A local tailor made jackets and black trousers for Duplant and myself within twenty-four hours. We endured the hot moist atmosphere of the Dacca Club garden without too much of a problem. The liquor flowed and both Pakistani men and their ladies in their really gorgeous colorful silk trousers and saris were drinking freely without any Muslim restriction. We left Dacca and returned to Bombay via Calcutta on the 17th of May.

Karachi was then the capital of Pakistan, both West and East. To continue our negotiations with Ahmedbhoy my father had agreed to fly to Bombay where I met him and accompanied by Duplant, flew from Bombay to Karachi on 26 May. At the *Hotel Metropole* we had rooms on the top floor of the hotel, which had a large roof garden extending over the entire building.

My father's daily routine included being shaved by a local barber. I remember Dad being ushered up to the cool roof to be shaved in the open with dozens of hotel workers and staff standing around to watch this amusing exhibition. Both my dad and I enjoyed flying and thought nothing of making appointments on the other side of the world and returning a few days later for another meeting. I was back in Karachi on 12 June, 3 August and 2 October, having in between flown

to our Japan office twice, the Egyptian plant three times, as well as to the London office and the Philippines.

Our negotiations were successful and before too long we founded the *Pakistan Rayon Corporation* with Ahmedbhoy as president and Dad, my brother and myself as directors. Prior to the division of East and West Pakistan into Pakistan and Bangladesh we had agreed that a plant in the more industrialized area near Karachi would have greater advantages, although Ahmedbhoy was from Dacca. After Pakistan's partition the negotiations collapsed, Ahmedbhoy retired to Bangladesh and our bankers were unwilling to make the required major investments in the new country, rife with revolution and constantly tormented by floods.

### **BISHOPSTOWE - 511 North Street, White Plains**

After the death of Henry's wife Joyce, Diana and I lived with Henry in his house in Scarsdale. One day Diana suddenly became listless and obviously quite sick. We phoned the family doctor who was not available, but another doctor, called away from a nearby party, came quite quickly,. He examined Diana and finally took a blood sample, promising that he would call us the following day. We liked the efficient way and pleasant bedside manner of Dr. Kaufman. He was a New Yorker, with a thriving medical practice on Park Avenue and recently appointed the head of the allergy clinic of the Lennox Hill Hospital further up the Avenue. He visited Diana the following day and diagnosed her ailment as *infectious mononucleosis* (glandular fever), prescribed bed rest and a diet to build up her run-down condition. Later he became our family doctor and through the years we became close personal friends with Bob and Naida Kaufman. Naida, nee Rose, came from Torquay, on the English Channel, where Bob had met her while the U S Army was preparing for the invasion of Europe. Bob had been a Captain in the infantry medical corps and was in the first wave across the channel.

Bob had an interesting hobby. A heavy smoker, he collected cigarettes from all over the world. A smoker myself, I became interested and helped him with his collection and built wooden racks that we mounted on the walls of his study. Each rack held fifty plastic tubes containing one cigarette, all sterilized against tobacco fungus. There were long ones and short ones, white and colored, with and without filters, many thousands from all over the world. The racks covered three walls of one room from floor to the ceiling and were arranged alphabetically from Argentina to Yugoslavia. In later years the collection was photographed and still features in The Guinness's Book of Records as *The World's Largest Cigarette Collection*.

Naida was an unbelievably talented amateur dressmaker. Her pride was a latest design Singer sewing machine that she played like a Stradivarius. We often went out for dinner together and invariably Naida would appear with a



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lovely new dress of the latest style, designed and sewn in the morning before we met for dinner. Bob was rightfully proud of his clever and frugal wife who could compete with others wearing frightfully expensive dresses from Bergdorf, Sachs or Bonwitt Teller.

Years before, I had overeaten or possibly eaten one bad oyster while visiting Paris. I used to love oysters but from then on could not swallow one of those wonderful bi-valves without getting violently sick. I had mentioned this allergy to Bob, he being an allergy specialist suggested I let him try and cure me. Later he explained the procedure to me. He obtained oysters, dried and dehydrated them. He then micro-pulverized the dried oysters and mixed the powder with distilled water. Over a period of several days he injected me, sub-cutaneously, with an ever-increasing dosage of the oyster mix. That first resulted in a large bump on my skin, but on successive days grew smaller as the treatment progressed. After about a week Bob felt confident that I had overcome my allergy and shortly after, at lunch, we both went to the Grand Central Station Oyster Bar to conduct an experiment. We both ordered half a dozen Long Island Blue Point oysters and after having gingerly swallowed first one and then another of the little delicacies, without any ill effect, I proceeded to finish the half dozen and then ordered a second six. I was able to pronounce the experiment a rousing success and have eaten oysters ever since, without any ill effects.

On 19 January 1955 I traveled again to Europe with Henry. Diana was still looking after Henry's three boys and stayed in New York. Joe Wirth, our corporate treasurer, had to follow up important negotiations on the continent and we decided to all travel together on the French Line's flagship *Liberté*. We each had a very luxurious double cabin and were looking forward to the trip. Henry is fond of white burgundy, *le Montrachet*, *Mersault* and a *Pouilly-Fuisse mousseux*. On the crossing we drank our way through two bottles of various vintages, every lunch and dinner. By the time we arrived, I was totally confused about these wines, but had enjoyed every drop. Disembarking at Le Havre, we took the boat train to Paris where we met up with other Von Kohorn staff, drove to Zürich and then flew on to Belgrade.

With several offices in Europe, South America and the Far East, fast communications were vital. Originally we used telegrams. These were typed up, collected by messengers on bicycles who also handled the delivery of incoming telegrams. Each competing telegraph company used their own uniformed messengers, wearing smart caps with their company's emblem above the peak. Later Western Union installed printers in our office that received the incoming messages on gummed strips of paper tape, which had to be pasted on the respective telegram forms. This eliminated the delivery messengers.

Six months later RCA and Globe Wireless installed competitive printers. We still had to summon the messengers via directly wired calling systems. Then came the next step of modernization. Each company installed a new device in our office requiring the telegram forms simply to be clamped on a drum that read and transferred the message to the cable companies' offices. That

eliminated the need of a pick-up messenger.

Further modernization was the advent of the teleprinter and from then on we could send and receive messages via the cable offices by simply using the keyboard. We only had to dial the teleprinter number before sending the message that was then directly printed out in the receiving office.

The Von Kohorn organization continued to grow and the Financial Development Fund Ltd took over the multi faceted task of supplying loans and financing to its clients. The American Patent Development Corporation handled patent rights and allied questions.

By this time our company's offices at 501 Fifth Avenue had become too small. Henry moved to a new home in nearby Connecticut and I was mostly traveling with Diana to various continents. White Plains, capital of Westchester County, was an office and residential area with no factories or similar industries permitted. It seemed like a good place for our office. Our staff had been commuting from New Jersey, Westchester and Connecticut to Manhattan Island and would find White Plains easier. I was happy to move from what had originally been my bachelors' apartment and take up residence in White Plains. A new office building came on the market at 180 Maple Avenue, with ample space and good parking facilities. Our corporate treasurer Joseph Wirth undertook the negotiations and a short-term lease for these premises was signed. In the meantime a purpose-designed building was erected at 360 Mamaroneck Avenue. The premises were completed in May 1961 and called Von Kohorn International Building. Our neighbors were IBM, Ford and Mobil Oil.

As soon as the decision had been made to move our office I started to look for a new home. After inspecting several estates a really wonderful home on North Street came on the market. We drove through the very imposing gates onto the property, saw *Bishopstowe* for the first time, looked at each other and both said: "This is the place we have been looking for."

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Of American colonial style it had four large white Doric columns in front holding up the roof over balustraded balcony and the entrance. Two wings led from the main structure. A circular drive came from the entrance gates to the front door and another drive led off to the right went to a vine covered three-car garage not too far away from the main building. Many large established oak trees were proof of the age of the landscaped gardens. The immaculately kept lawns and floral borders showed that the property had been perfectly maintained.

The inside was equally impressive. Two walk-in closets on both sides of the



front door gave ample space for hats and coats of visitors. The hall, leading off the entrance, gave access through wide double doors to a sizable living room to the left and a dining room to the right. A circular staircase of ample proportion led to the floor above, its walls covered with a drape-like green wallpaper. We placed a one-and-a-half meter high Chinese vase in the middle of the stair sweep and above hung a chandelier. Behind the staircase was a large powder room with an adjoining toilet and a back door into the servery and kitchen.

Three doorways led off the dining room, one to a screened-in outdoor dining area, another into the breakfast room and on through the butler's pantry into the kitchen. Two folding double doors led out to the front of the house. Later, the dining room was furnished with an ornate Baccarat chandelier carrying nine candelabras. It was suspended above the long oval table that seated twelve when completely extended. The Chippendale style chairs were upholstered in yellow leather.

From the living room French doors ushered visitors to an outdoor flagstone terrace with wide steps leading down to the gardens. Two openings on both

sides of a large open fireplace led into the bar/sunroom with windows on three sides overlooking the lawns and flowering trees. Bamboo shutters over the bar windows, kept out the sunlight but allowed an ample view into the surrounding green areas. Once we occupied the house we installed built-in lighting over our collection of Italian and Dutch renaissance paintings and over the polished brown walnut grand piano. Matching the French doors on the garden side, two doors led to the outside at the front of the house.

There were white shutters for all of the doors and windows so that the house could be securely closed.

The first floor contained two sizable suites in the front. A door between them led out to the balcony where we used to put up flags with the colors of the visitors' countries. To the left was the master suite with adjoining bathroom and dressing room and to the right the visitors' quarters with similar appointments.

Our suite had a high placed window on one wall, obviously planned to allow the beds to be placed beneath. We changed this, removed most of the wall and replaced it with a very large double glazed window, extending across most of that area of the bedroom. There were two large walk-in closets that were assigned to me. Diana took over the dressing room with its two enormous closets extending along two sides.

The upstairs hall could also be reached through backstairs leading from the kitchen to the first floor and on to the second floor above. From the winding staircase two doors led back to two rooms that were to become the children's area. The rear stairs led up to the next floor that contained the servants' quarters and consisted of three smallish bedrooms, two adequate bathrooms and a living/sewing room. It also had a large dormered room that later became my stamp collection study.

The kitchen was spacious, modern and well appointed with masses of electric outlets, three sinks and pot hanging space above the stove. Three walk-in cupboards gave adequate space for large cooking utensils. One staircase led to the basement and another to the upstairs hall and servant's quarters. In the back entrance was a cork-pulling device for wine bottles brought up from the cellar and a stone sink for flower arranging with large cabinets above to hold vases. Stairs led down to the garden path that connected with the basement and with the garages.

All living areas were thickly carpeted from wall to wall and the previous owners had obviously always carefully looked after their house. Their only daughter had recently been married and the house had become too large for just the two. A basement extended under the entire area of the house. It held a modern oil-fired hot water system supplying wall heaters below every window in the house as well as water cylinders for the bathrooms and kitchen. There were storage areas at each wall, a wine cellar, as well as a room with two freezers and still enough space to permit me later to install a workshop and twenty breeding tanks for our tropical fish.

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After having been taken through the house by the real estate agent we made up our mind to buy. I remember phoning Mr. Salston, who was our corporate assistant treasurer, and telling him to get the place at the best price. A week later the papers were signed. Thinking back today, it seems unreal that I simply gave orders to buy the property, without any thought to cost. I only found out how much I had paid when I sold the house in 1964 after my divorce.

Money was something that had always been handled for me. Personal finances were something *not very nice* and left to experts. I was an outstanding negotiator for financial dealings in business and banking, but that had nothing to do with my personal matters. I did not feel degraded haggling with the Japanese government bank for a quarter of a percentage point, but did not trust myself to squabble over the price of real estate, knowing very little of property values.

We moved from our apartment at One Thousand Park Avenue in New York City to Five Eleven North Street, White Plains in Westchester County in 1955. The first hurdle was to hire staff. Our live-in maid from New York refused to accompany us to the country and Diana spent much time visiting recommended employment agencies. We moved in September, four months before our daughter Karen was born and there was adequate time to hire a nanny. We decided on a husband and wife team to look after the house and a separate cook to handle the continuous stream of visitors and guests that was the normal routine of my business life. A daily gardener was to continue keeping the estate looking beautiful, with lawns cut, seasonal fresh flowers blooming, trees and borders trimmed, leaves removed in the autumn and snow shoveled in the winter.

This turned out to be a job too great for one man without adequate machinery and we soon fell in with the Westchester standard operating procedure and employed a commercial organization to take care of the whole place and bring in mechanized equipment as required. There was a flat monthly sum for all work plus extras such as purchasing new plants, lawn sprinkler equipment, etc. The gardens were superb and we enjoyed them in every season of the year, particularly the flowering trees, such as dogwood and vary colored maples in the spring.

The first couple we employed was from England and although we had made it clear that we were not looking for a butler and waitress they saw themselves in that role. My suits were beautifully pressed, the shoes shone and the silver gleamed, but our guests were taken aback when the apparition of an English butler opened the front door to our home. His wife's serving at the table was flawless, but the vacuuming of the carpets and cleaning of baths and toilets left much to be desired. We parted company before the thirty day trial period was up.

The second couple was Hungarian. Marie had a smattering of English but Hans spoke only Hungarian and German. He did not fit in with my ideas of carrying a silver tray, serving after dinner liqueurs or looking after my suits. His wife did,

however, manage to make a very good maid and kept the house spotless. Hans was an outdoors' man. One day he decided that the white, ivy covered columns needed painting. I was the last to spoil such enthusiasm and told him to go ahead, while both of us were abroad on a trip. He started with one column and carefully cutting down the ivy, sanded it by hand until exposing the bare wood. He then rubbed in linseed oil and started with the first undercoat, then the next and the next. A week later the column was finished. A sparkling white, setting off the yellowish gray of the other five. When we returned it suddenly dawned on me that the ivy, which obviously had required several years to grow, was missing. An unfortunate decision had then to be made for which there was a foregone conclusion. We had to cut down all the lovely ivy or not paint the columns. I was traveling a lot during that period and received position reports every week of the columns' status. Number 2 completed, starting on number 3. Ivy cut off and sanding has begun. Hans made a beautiful job. It took a very long, six months and we became famous around White Plains for having painters permanently working on our home.

One day Marie and Hans came to me to discuss an important matter. They had a fifteen year-old daughter in Hungary that they now wanted to bring to the United States and needed funds for her travel. I agreed to finance the ticket; a deduction to be made every week from their salary to pay back the loan. We agreed she could have one of the rooms on the top floors and could help her mother working around the house after school.

She arrived in due course and went to the local school. One day, while I was in our office I received a call from the fire department that our house was on fire and to come home immediately. When I arrived, the street outside the property and the drive were filled with fire engines. By then the fire was out fortunately with minimum damage. Our young lady had secretly taken up smoking and set fire to her bed. The scary part was that her bedroom was next to my stamp collection study and could have destroyed all albums either by fire or water. The fire department had used foam extinguishers with a minimum of damage and thrown the smoldering mattress out of the window into the garden.

In January 1956 our first child was born in Manhattan and a few days later Diana and I, with Karen in a basket, were driven by Fred, Dad's chauffeur, to White Plains. We had hired a nanny, and all the staff of *Bishopstowe* were waiting for the arrival home of our little daughter. Eighteen months later Kirk, who now calls himself Steven, was added to the family. He was born in White Plains in July 1957. Both Karen and Kirk were christened in White Plains at the Presbyterian Church.

One of our hobbies was raising tropical fish. I installed wooden shelving in the basement, wiring for the fluorescent lights, air pumps and water heaters and took delivery of 20 small fish tanks.

It was fun stocking the aquaria with the usual kissing gouramis, neon tetras, red and black mollies, Siamese fighting fish. I brought different species home in plastic bags, floating them in the tanks to accustom them to water quality and



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temperature. I learned to differentiate a male with its gonopodium from the females, to separate a pregnant lady fish and place it in a breeding tank, to prevent a hungry mum or dad from eating its young, and spent hours removing dozens of babies with a tiny net and then release them in a tank safe for baby fish.

One of our favorite guests was Elizabeth Arden. An Australian, she was friendly with Diana and a number of times we had been dinner guests in her magnificent duplex apartment on Fifth Avenue. My mother had been a client of hers for many years and spent many weeks at the Arden retreat Main Chance. We invited Elizabeth to spend a completely quiet weekend at our home, away from her telephones and busy life. On Saturday night we had taken her to one of the fine Westchester County country inns for dinner and returned home early. She had asked for porridge for breakfast and to our cook that meant porridge as was served regularly to our children. That is - prepared baby porridge to which hot water and milk was added. Elizabeth did not say a word about the fauxpax. Sunday continued in peace and quiet, we had lunch in the garden and late in the afternoon her chauffeured blue Cadillac limousine came to pick her up and return her to New York. On Monday morning her chauffeur arrived with a package *from Miss Arden*. It contained Scottish raw porridge and a handwritten humorous recipe detailing how to prepare breakfast porridge for grownups.

Several weeks later there was an uncomfortable moment during a dinner party at Elizabeth's home. Due to a last minute cancellation of one of the lady guests, I had no dinner partner and was seated next to the husband of *Miss Mary Martin*. I did not realize that he was gay until he started first to rub his foot



against mine, and, when I did not react, started to touch me at my thighs. I was in a complete quandary what to do. It was a formal black-tie dinner party, with well-known socialites and artists as guests. Should I jump up and complain loudly, should I sit still and act as if nothing had happened? I started to cough violently as if I was choking, excused myself and left the dining room to go to the toilet. After my return there was no further attempt to touch me, but it spoiled the entire dinner party for me.

Another of our important houseguests at *Bishopstowe* was Robert Gordon Menzies, then the Prime Minister of Australia and his wife Pattie. Bob had been the Storey's family attorney and still provided advice when required. Bob was in New York for a United Nations meeting and we had invited him to spend a quiet weekend in the country, with home cooking and no other guests. Saturday, early afternoon, there were police sirens on North Street and a motorcycle cavalcade came roaring into our drive with a huge black limousine in the center, flying the Australian and American flags on the front fenders. Stopping under the portico the chauffeur handed Bob and Pattie out of the car and carried their luggage into the house. While the ladies disappeared upstairs the Prime Minister and I walked into the bar. Bob's eyes lit up, "I certainly could use a drink."

I had searched New York and finally succeeded in purchasing a bottle *Corio*, an Australian brand whisky. I stepped behind the bar while Bob sat on one of the bar stools in front. With a flourish I produced the bottle of *Corio*, so laboriously obtained, and proudly offered it to him. I shall never forget his reaction:

"Sir!" he thundered. "Are you trying to poison me? Away with that rubbish. I am a Scot and deserve Scottish whisky. Hand me that *Black Label* you must surely be hiding from me." There was no further problem once I produced the appropriate Scottish beverage. I dined out on the *Corio* whisky story and all my friends insisted on trying the 'Aussie' brand, so much so, that I had to order several more bottles before interest waned.

Diana was vice-president of the Australian American Association. We decided to give a large charity party for all the members of the association with the proceeds to go to the cancer foundation. To accommodate the large numbers to be invited, we decided to hold it in our garden. Although it was summer and settled weather would probably give us a fine day, we had arranged for a marquee that could be erected in a few hours. The gods were with us and the day was perfect. We had over three hundred guests and the cancer foundation received a large sum from the Australian American Association.

One very difficult luncheon was that given for Ghanshyamdas Birla (known as GD) and his entourage. Mr. Birla was a very strict vegetarian who traveled the world in one of his private planes bringing with him his own cook and valet. They were staying at the Plaza Hotel in New York and he trusted Diana enough to accept a luncheon invitation in complete confidence that nothing prohibited would be served. GD however was not only a vegetarian; he also would not eat eggs or any food that had come in contact with meat, fish or eggs. It was not

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easy to serve a satisfying meal meeting those criteria. The only permissible beverages were water, juices and milk.

Having spent enough time in India a meal was easily planned and served to our important clients. After lunch we sat on the terrace and were served fresh orange juice. On the way to the terrace GD passed one of our prized possessions, a white autographed Sevres bisque statue of *The Three Graces*. He admired it at great length and while sipping his juice remarked several more times about the 'wonderful piece of Meissen'. There is an old Eastern custom that if someone admires one of your possessions, you can do no less than to give it to him. It almost broke my heart, but I went outside removed the bisque statue and wrapped it carefully in soft paper and handed it to our friend when he left our home. I never heard another word about it, but a few months later we entered into a long term contract with one of his companies. Bread spread upon the water?

Diana's sister Judith Anne came visiting from Melbourne in early 1959. Jude is the godmother of our daughter Karen, and the origin of her second name - Janne. While she stayed with us the girls visited New York City a number of times and the three of us went to see the latest Broadway play 'Oklahoma' that had recently opened. I was dead tired, after a long day at the office, and after the performance we picked up my car from a nearby parking building to drive home to White Plains. About twenty minutes later, we were driving north on the Hutchinson River Parkway. The three of us sat in the wide front seat of the Cadillac, Diana sleeping on the right side, Jude in the middle while I was driving. Suddenly I heard: "Oh, Ralph," and straightened up.

The car was driving on the verge of the highway. I had fallen asleep at the wheel and when Jude woke me, we were heading for one of the tall light standards directly in front of the car. Before I could stop, we hit the timber pole, snapped it and I watched it sail over the car and land behind us on the verge. Apart from a dent in the middle of the front bumper, the incident left no lasting damage and the insurance company took care of the replacement and repair. From then on I found it sensible to take a Ritalin pill, whenever I had to drive at night, after a full day in the office. I could then not sleep, but at least I stayed awake when driving home.

My cousin Gerry loved to come up at weekends and spend two days in the country. A city boy all his life he knew even less than I did about gardening and growing things. Along one side of the garages was a narrow strip of flower border. He had set his mind to planting tomatoes there and arrived with several books on growing tomatoes and the appropriate seeds. It was the season recommended for planting and never before had seedlings ever been sown with more care and individual attention. Every time Gerry visited he inspected 'his' plants and as soon as the first green appeared from the soil he was ready with stakes and bags of appropriate fertilizer. The surprising end of his agricultural efforts was the successful harvesting of luscious red, juicy tomatoes that we thoroughly enjoyed making into a fresh tomato salad and devouring on a warm summer's evening as an accompaniment to an outdoor barbecue.

The lowest portion of the gardens was always swampy and I was looking for a way to drain it. Planting of weeping willows, which are said to suck up excess water, was recommended. Other suggestions were to raise the level of the surrounding land by about a meter or to create small permanent pools. I preferred to be sure and shortly after we raised the land by means of fill, planted six weeping willows and created a small pool. We were partly successful. The pool regularly overflowed until we installed a drain into the adjoining land. The willows grew like weeds and shot up several meters over the next few years and the raised land allowed us to erect a pergola carrying wisteria, which gave off the most exquisite fragrance while they flowered.

In the spring the gardens were a profusion of colors. The circular drive enclosed massive clumps of rhododendrons in various shades of reds. We had outdoor lighting installed and the colorful center was lit up when it grew dark. The Canadian maples with their luscious red leaves and several dogwood trees to the left of our home were often admired particularly when they flowered long into the spring.

Even in autumn the property was beautiful. When the leaves started to change color and the greens turned into yellows and browns the white house stood out against the dark hues of the surrounding plantings and trees. Winter and the accompanying snow were less welcome. In autumn all window mosquito screens had to be removed, from every window on every floor, and replaced with the corresponding double glazed window frame. Every window had a number and both the screens and double windows had a corresponding number. On the day of 'changing the screens' as it was known, a commercial contractor came with ladders, tools and cleaning equipment. The replacements were taken from their storage racks in the basement, hosed down and if necessary repaired. After removal of the summer, or respective winter units, the substitution was made, the frames fitted, paint touched up if necessary, and left for the next six months.

Although not tropical, summer in Westchester County can be very hot. Having been used to air conditioning in our New York apartment, we missed the cooled air and shortly after moving in, installed individual window units in most of the rooms.

Winter often brought heavy snowfall. If the fall was very heavy the usual mechanical snowplow equipment, which scraped the snow off the ground, was insufficient and a device cutting the snow and blowing it over the edge was used. Our gardening contractor supplied the ordinary equipment. The snow-cutting device, however, had to be brought in by the company that serviced our cars. I remember several times when we were snowed in and had to wait until equipment became available. I would then climb, slide and struggle out of the property. I would have someone pick me up on the always-swept main road to drive me to our office building. In spite of all that, winters were wonderful and the first snow of the season was an exciting event. So was spring. When the first snowdrops and crocuses came peeking through the snow I was often tempted to have breakfast on the outdoor terrace in spite of the close to zero



temperatures.

## **CARIBBEAN AND CENTRAL AMERICA**

Our good friends and neighbors on North Street in White Plains were Larry and Isabel Barnett. We met frequently, at home, on our boat and when we went out to dinner. Larry was the head of the Music Corporation of America. His wife Isabel neé Bigley, born in England, was the former famous Broadway singer and star of the musical *Guys and Dolls*, who made famous the song *I enjoy being a Girl*. Later Larry became president of the huge Chris Craft Corporation, one of the world's largest manufacturers of yachts and power cruisers.

We decided we would like to spend a holiday together and selected The Bermudas as the most convenient venue. Allowing for several changes of clothing every day we packed far too much but left behind Bermuda shorts and blue blazers. We intended to purchase those 'on-the-spot' once we arrived in Hamilton. The ubiquitous stretch limo was waiting at the airport and took us to the Royal Bermudian Hotel. From then on horse drawn carriages were the accepted mode of transport on the island.

One of the first places we visited was the beautiful pink governor's mansion. After that we systematically walked from one store to the next admiring the many British goods for sale in this colony. Of great interest was the Wedgwood store with excellent packing and shipping service back to the States. There were also liquor outlets with the numerous brands of whisky, gin and many different types of rum in large sizes unavailable in the United States. Here too, the shipping service with guaranteed delivery was very tempting and ultimately proved to be a safe experience.



In 1954 it became necessary for our company to have an office in the Republic of Panama. We appointed Arnold Salomon, a young New Yorker, to head our local operations, which were predominantly personnel related,



accounting and managerial. As assistant we selected young de Zaruba, son of Mother's old friend from Hollywood. Under a local law we were required to include in the company's name the organization's main activity that had to be spelled out in Spanish. Von Kohorn Corporation, a name we used worldwide was not acceptable. Complying with these regulations, we incorporated our new company as Von Kohorn Constructora de Plantas Rayon Sociedad Anonyma, at best a mouthful. Fortunately this stringency was later relaxed and we shortened the name to simply Von Kohorn Constructora operating quietly out of Panama City.

Visits to the Caribbean were not exclusively business. Diana and I decided to take a few days off and relax in the balmy waters of Jamaica. At that time much was made of the private villas available for rent at Montego Bay, many owned by movie stars and British investors.

We leased a lovely house at Round Hill, on the side overlooking the bay. The rent included staff and a Land Rover. We flew from New York on January Sixth via AVIANCA, the Venezuelan airline to Montego Bay. The atmosphere of Jamaica was totally different from the other West Indian islands and Montego very different from Kingston, the capital on the other side of the island. When we visited in 1955 Jamaica was still a British colony, with a Governor General looking after the affairs of the island.

Our nine-day holiday gave us a complete rest and recuperation from the past year's almost continuous travel through Europe, the Orient and South America.

## **THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON**

It is strange how a small incident can lead to something very major. Karen's godfather was Al Daff that I had first met in Japan in 1937. Al was originally from Melbourne and by 1955 was spending a lot of time in New York and elected president of the American Australian Association. Diana was its Vice President and we saw a lot of Al and his successive wives.

My parents had acquired a very beautiful estate in Ridgefield, New York, near the Connecticut country town of Waterbury. There were several guestrooms



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and we often enjoyed inviting friends to spend weekends with us. The property was quite extensive and there were two small lakes not too far from the homestead. One of these abounded with tiny fish while the other contained a large number of fat green frogs that regularly commenced croaking early in the morning.

Knowing of our frogs noisy habit we always warned our guests to disregard the frogs' music and try to go back to sleep. Al had visited us a number of times previously and recently had a change from Mrs. Daff No. 1 to No. 2. Much later in 1965 Al married Annalisa Soderbloom who was Swedish and like his previous wives, blond and beautiful. A former Swedish movie star she was the daughter of one of Stockholm's leading churchmen and their marriage was one of Hollywood society wedding's of the year.

Back in the nineteen fifties we had driven up to Ridgefield late one Friday and our guests came up on Saturday after lunch. There was a lot to amuse us. We did some shooting with 22-calibre rifles in the woods that ran up a steep hill on the back of the property. We often climbed through the dense foliage to the ridge on top of the rise overlooking our tract of land and spent hours fishing, usually with little success. Often we drove into Waterbury to do some 'antiquing'.

Al was an early riser and enjoyed walking through the garden when dew was on the grass and birds were giving their morning concerts. One morning he came across one ugly brown toad that had jumped out of the frog pond and sat at the ponds edge puffing up its sides. Al knelt down in the grass held out his hand and the silly web-footed amphibian, out of love or fear, or possibly short sightedness, jumped onto Al's outstretched hand. It is not clear who was more surprised, Al or the toad. They looked at each other, neither moving; the toad puffed himself up once more and jumped back into the pond.

That should be the end of the story, but it was not. Later over breakfast Al told us of his meeting with the toad and we laughed. The following morning Al was up early and knelt waiting at the pond's edge. Coincidence or love at first sight? The toad, or a close relative, came back out of the pond and, Al swore, jumped into his waiting hand a second time. Then the battle for supremacy was on and the two stared at each other until the toad jumped back into the pond. Over breakfast that morning it emerged that Al had been thinking of his toad all during the night and proposed to develop it into a movie.

At various times over the next several months he kept us advised of the progress and the change of thinking from the toad into a creature and the pond into a black lagoon. We learned that an idea was turned over to a developer, the concept then given to a writer and his product brought before a group of executives. Obviously, if the idea came from the studio's vice president the other executives went along with it. We were delighted to be invited to attend the premier of the film in New York City. *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* that had been born in our Ridgfield pond.

After his eventual retirement from the movie industry Al joined our business

organization and was active in our Australian operations. He died in 1988 and his last wife, Annalisa passed away in 1992.

Apart from breakfast we never bothered with cooking. Lunch was usually a picnic, with wonderful delicatessen brought with us from New York. The evening meals were invariably eaten in one of the numerous Inns that dot the New York/Connecticut countryside. In spite of the large number, the better ones were usually full and required reservations, unless the owners knew you. We tried to make our reservations for Saturday nights a week ahead of time and obtain tables where we knew the waiters. These restaurants were usually lovely old former large homes with large open fireplaces and had a charm typical of that part of the country. Valet parking took much of the drudgery out of arriving at a restaurant. Once seated at a table in deep soft chairs with a white tablecloth and gleaming silverware, you could settle down to the important task of selecting food and wines. One of our favorite places was The Crémaillère, only fifteen minutes drive from our property.

Many establishments followed the Italian precept and served large numbers of antipasti. They were selected from small dishes cradled in revolving hangers on trolleys rolled to the tables. Artichoke bottoms and red peppers marinated in olive oil, different types of salamis, black and green olives, pickled onions, mushrooms, Prosciutto ham, radishes, hard boiled eggs, anchovies all on a trolley that carried twenty-four white porcelain dishes. It was always difficult to select only a little and to leave space for the main course and one of the 'special' desserts.

Roast beef was often served a la carte which, like the antipasto, would be placed on a trolley and rolled alongside the diner to select thickness and state of cooking ranging from outside cuts to blood rare middle pieces. Local fare often included game birds, Cornish hens and the omnipresent roasted Long Island Duckling with cherry sauce.

The wine cellars of these restaurants were always stocked with the gamut of imported and local wines and one could chose from French, Italian, German or other European labels as well as California or similar domestic grapes.

After finishing dessert and possibly making a selection from a large assortment on the cheese boards it was time for the freshly brewed coffee and the drive home. The narrow winding country roads were dark and headlights of oncoming cars could be seen for a long distance. Most drivers traveled at a slow speed. When safely in the house you could relax with a brandy or liqueur before turning in for the night. We had a well supplied bar and all sorts of weird mixtures were concocted by mixing or floating varicolored spirits in tall parfait glasses.

## EUROPE IN 1956 AND 1957

For many trips within Europe, Paris proved to be a wonderful center. Air France flew to every part of the continent and the rest of the world. We had the marvelous George Cinq as our Hotel and knew enough specialty restaurants to make every visit exciting. Whenever we met with overseas friends and clients in Paris, we could act as guides and take them to the best shops and department stores. Personally, I was never too interested in music and art and studiously managed to avoid visits to the Louvre, other museums, galleries, churches and places of culture. I did enjoy, however, browsing through the *bouquinistes* at the left bank of the Seine, spending hours at the 'Flea Market', or taking rides on the low boats that passed under the river bridges.

Often we used Paris as the meeting place with the heads of the various Von Kohorn organizations. They were usually accompanied by their wives. Senior staff of our Osaka and Taiwan offices would have an opportunity to discuss supply problems with our London and Darmstadt operations. Delivery delays to our factories in Egypt or Yugoslavia would be resolved. In later years our operations in the Soviet Union involved coordinating the arrival of vital materials from the USA, the UK, Germany and Switzerland. The boys met in the morning to hash out difficulties that seemed insurmountable because of vast distances. 'The girls' had a wonderful time shopping in the fashionable Paris stores and boutiques.

We formed a joint company with the German Krupp organization and decided to open an office in Zürich. The company was called Industrial Plants Corporation and Dad was its Chairman, in Switzerland called *Vorsitzer des Aufsichtsrat*. Dr. Alfred Lehner, a graduate of the Eidgenoesischen Technischen Hochschule, managed the office. My parents took up residence in the Hotel Baur au Lac on Talstrasse, a block away from the lake. The office was nearby, modern, well lit and in typical Swiss style designed with much plate glass, aluminum, and of course kept spic and span by the local cleaning staff. The engineering staff came mostly from Germany or our American offices.

The Baur au Lac was quite a hotel. The rooms were furnished with magnificent antiques, exquisite chandeliers, original paintings and the service superlative. My parents had a small apartment facing the lakefront and overlooking the entrance. Mother had one of the rooms furnished as a living room, and with all amenities available in the Hotel, Oscar and Vally's life was easy and orderly.

There was a lady string quartet in the lobby that fiddled merrily from three to five every afternoon. In the dining room was the precision drill of the waiters who used to line up behind the guests and in unison whip off the silver *cloche* covers from the plates. The crockery was decorated with bunches of grapes. For many years the *maître d' hotel* was also the chief examiner of the Swiss Tourist Hotel School. Once a young man or girl was accepted to work in the Baur au Lac dining room they were assured staff jobs in any restaurant in the world. The *maître d' hotel*, known throughout the industry and to his many guests around the world only as 'Napoléon', was revered by his guests and feared by

his staff.

Our lawyer was Dr. Stähelin and his knowledge of small and outstanding restaurants in this city was only surpassed by his knowledge of the law. He introduced us to *Mere Royaume* and *du Plat d'Argent*, only known to the locals, and serving superlative food at very high prices. Then there were the fine garden restaurants along the Lake Zürich and quiet little bistros, hidden away and yet undiscovered by the tourists. We always enjoyed walking down Bahnhofstrasse with its wonderful shops, banks and coffee houses. No matter how often we had promenaded on the streets before, it always remained a never-ending visual pleasure. Although learned many years ago, my Schwiyzerdütsch was still passable and a friendly 'Grützi' when entering a shop classified me, if not necessarily as a native, at least not as a visitor. I had opened a bank account with the Schweizerbankverein in St. Gallen in the early thirties and although a world war had intervened, my account was quickly converted from savings to checking and transferred with ease to the main office of the bank in Zürich.

I had been to our Darmstadt office for a week, then for a week at the Zürich office and had a few days before I had to return to our White Plains office. We decided to visit one of Europe's highly praised holiday spots, the Pollensa Bay on the island of Majorca (Mallorca). Diana and I flew from Switzerland to Barcelona and took Iberia Air Line to Palma de Majorca on 8 June 1956, arriving at half past eight at night. Too late to continue on to our destination, reservations had been made for us for the night at Hotel San Vida.

We left the next morning for the drive to Inca. The road with many hairpin bends took us past several castle ruins to Cabo Formentor the northernmost point of the island. Our reservations had been made by the Krupp organization and we found ourselves in a private club-like hotel with all amenities of the highest standard and not open to the public. The position of the hotel on the cape was superb, overlooking the entire bay, with its blue water and below us its own private beach. After a few days of perfect solitude we returned to Palma and on 15 June flew to London and on to New York.

Our holiday on the Spanish island was such a success that we tried to repeat it on one of the Italian islands. Diana and I were eager to visit Sicily. On October 1957 we flew from Rome to Catania, a small town on the foot of Mt. Aetna. There we hired a car and drove to Palermo where we stayed for about one week.

We decided to go fishing and walked from the villa down to the small port. As instructed, we had asked the chef at the villa for small shrimp to use as bait. We arrived with our bag of shrimp and a handful of Italian lira and found to our surprise that our fishing boat turned out to be a rowboat captained by a very elderly and very fat old Sicilian. He directed us to sit, one in front and one in the back of the small clinker built boat. Once he had rowed us sufficiently far enough off shore to assure that we could not escape, our *siciliano* explained in his native tongue, incomprehensible to me, but which became clear by means

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of many gesticulations, that he had a bladder problem. He would cover himself modestly with a tent-sized raincoat and relieve himself frequently into a glass jar. Being young and unforgiving concerning any medical problems, I found that episode disgusting and tried in my best French and Latin to explain that I expected him to cease and desist in such repulsive antics. He sighed and made a shrugging Gallic gesture with his shoulders and hands, indicating his inability of doing anything about the situation. He proceeded with nature's needs and, I must admit, was most circumspect.

That part of our fishing trip was a success as my wife was sitting discreetly behind our captain and looking up into the sky during his lengthy tinkling. What was less successful was hooking any fish. After baiting the hook frequently, but without catching any fish, I finally decided to eat the lovely fresh shrimps *a la sashimi*, which almost caused our oarsman to gag when he watched me chew merrily on the raw crustaceans.

We visited several small villages whitewashed buildings piled higgledy-piggledy on both sides of the cobblestone streets. The houses reminding me of biblical and Roman movies I had seen. Every village had a square, with a fountain in the center, and women still collected water in large containers from four spouts. Donkeys wore rakishly placed straw hats over their ears and pulled colorful two wheeled wagons, loaded with tourists that were in themselves a tourist attraction. Tiny fields, surrounded by low stone fences, kept the few goats and cows from straying. We were talked into buying six huge terracotta urns, which we shipped home to White Plains, together with various useless woven straw items and very breakable brightly painted earthenware platters. At the end of our stay we drove to Messina, where we left our car and took the *Alliscae* hydrofoil *Freccia Delle Eolie* to Reggio Calabria. There we picked up the flight back to Rome.

Darmstadt where we had one of our European offices was once the capital of the Kingdom of Hessa and maintained much of its charm through the past two World Wars. We rented a large *Villa* and converted it into an engineering office with drafting facilities, equipped with the latest drawing tables and print copying equipment. The technical heads were Franz Fourné from Bonn and Dr. Ludwig Moldenhauer from the Bodensee, who supervised the European operations. Dr. Moldenhauer had a quaint hobby. It was to travel over all European main *Autobahnen*. He marked those traveled on a special roadmap. His hobby made him select roads, often out of the way, and he would sometimes plan business visits to our machinery suppliers, based on a yet untraveled road, rather than on the shortest distances.

Darmstadt is located in the middle of one of Germany's outstanding vineyard areas. It became noticeable that many of the peripatetic Von Kohorn staff suddenly found it essential to visit the Darmstadt office during the annual wine harvest time. Shopping in the beautifully restored town was an adventure. Along *Die Königsallee* Europe's finest stores vied with each other to offer the best luggage, the most select crystal or porcelain, exquisite embroidery and fabrics. We always stayed at the very old, but totally modernized hotel *Der*

*Breidenbacher Hof*. We would often sit in the lobby, while digesting a typically heavy German evening meal, savoring a bottle of specially selected *Trockenbeerenauslese* Rhine wine, as sweet as honey and as fine as any French white burgundy of the *Barsac* or *Chateau d'Yquem* variety.

Our close association with the Krupp organization resulted in several invitations to *Villa Hügel*, the Essener family residence of the Krupps and the home of Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach. Alfried's father had been convicted under the Nürnberg (Nuremberg) War Trials Act but because of his advanced age, his son was permitted to serve his father's sentence. Krupp's alter ego was Berthold Beitz, later to become the head of the Krupp organization. He had been granted an 'absolute' power of attorney, restricted only by the prohibition that he could not marry in Alfried's stead.

Berthold Beitz visited us in New York and after a reception at my parent's apartment we all dined at the Persian Room of the Plaza Hotel. His table partner for the evening was my mother's erstwhile colleague; the famous Viennese opera star Vera Schwartz. One of the Persian Room's most famous desserts was Bombe Alaska and the restaurant was proud of its presentation. With great flair a waiter would convey the Bombe to the table and, with a dramatic flourish, ignite the alcohol which then ran down the curled peel of an orange and enveloped the meringue in flames.

One of the memorable occasions of our various stays in Germany was a very formal invitation to attend a reception on 8 November 1954 in honor of the ruler of Abyssinia (Ethiopia), His Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie. The invitation had been received in August when I was in West Pakistan (now Bangladesh). Since Ethiopia was definitely on the list of future rayon plants, I was more than anxious for an opportunity to meet in person with His Majesty and lay the ground work for future talks with an Ethiopian representative. At the time I was in the middle of negotiations in Dacca with Ahmedboy. Flights via Calcutta to Frankfurt were easily arranged and I reserved transport to Essen from the Rhine Main airport with a chauffeur driven limousine in keeping with the imperial invitation that had included a sticker for the cars approaching Villa Hügel.

The Emperor was a man of very short stature, less than one and a half meters tall, dressed impeccably in a white uniform, and green and gold sash. Although the party was held indoors he wore a white helmet with plumes. When we were presented to the Emperor he addressed us in French, a language he felt most comfortable with, in preference to English.

The reception went without a hitch. When it was my turn to be presented to His Majesty, I took the gloved proffered hand, bowed from the waist and mumbled in English how glad I was to have met. I could have mumbled in French or German since we had been told he was fluent in those languages. I have clear memory of the meeting and that champagne was handed to us while we remained standing during the audience.

After a short visit to our office in Darmstadt, I returned to the east to continue negotiations there. The Pakistan Rayon Corporation was duly founded, but



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never came to fruition because of difficulties with financing. Likewise, our Ethiopian negotiations collapsed due to political changes in Addis Ababa.

## MOSCOW

My first trip to the Soviet Union was the third April 1958. Oscar had been there several times in the late twenties when we installed three rayon factories for the Government.

During the fifties I had negotiated in London with President Klentsov of Technomaschimport, the Soviet delegation, for almost one year and we had finally reached sufficient agreement to warrant my visit to Moscow. My visa was approved and I picked it up at the consular section of the Soviet Embassy in Prague. The Czechoslovakian capital was still run down in post-war depression style and the Russian Embassy did little to change that impression. It was, if possible, even more run down and the dirty yellow building looked as forbidding as all the stories about the KGB and OGPU had led me to believe. The red flag with its golden hammer and sickle was the only color on the street.

There were two Czech policemen in a small wooden hut guarding the outside of the entrance and two Russian soldiers with sub-machine guns guarding the inside. It was April and still cold and blustery. I held out my American passport and said: 'Visa. Visa.'

That explanation appeared sufficient and I was permitted to pull open the heavy wood door leading into the embassy. A uniformed guard sitting behind a desk asked me a question in a guttural language. I could not even recognize whether it was Czech or Russian, and again I held out my passport and said: 'Visa. Visa.'

The guard pointed up the winding staircase to the next floor and up I trudged. There was another guard and as I was not a slow learner I held out my magic passport and intoned: 'Visa. Visa.' Here procedure changed. The guard got up and motioned me to follow him to one of the many closed doors lining both sides of the wide hallway. All signs on the doors were in Cyrillic but I was able to make out something that looked like Konsular.

I entered and to my surprise found a consular official that spoke German. My American passport shows Germany as my place of birth and the official's English was certainly worse than his German. The visit was quickly over. I was to leave my passport, fill out a four-page questionnaire in triplicate and bring back three passport photos. They expected to have advice from Moscow in a few days.

It was impossible to stay in Prague without the protection of a passport. One was asked several times a day for identification and for a foreigner the passport was absolutely essential. How to overcome that complication? The Russian insisted on holding my passport and I refused to leave without it. We finally

reached a compromise. He would take the passport into the next room to show it to his comrade. When he came back, having passed the buck, he was almost human and returned my passport with a request to come back in three days. I thanked him, made my way along the hall and down the stairs, past the guards and out of the door, always waving my passport and smiling at every one of the stern and sour looking uniformed sentries.

I returned three days later and, with only a short delay, caused by a change of consular staff, received my visa, surprisingly issued free of charge. I was now ready to make my reservation from Prague to Moscow on the next available Aeroflot flight. First-class in the Russian-built Tupolev plane was not exactly a symbol of Soviet splendor. The seats were narrow, the white crochet antimacassars for the head grubby, the stewardess fat and looked resentfully at the passengers who were entitled to better service than those in the rear of the plane. We left in the late afternoon and although the flight was to be less than three hours I followed the sage advice always to bribe the staff to receive better service. I carried several lipsticks, bought at the American PX in Vienna to which I had access, and unobtrusively handed one to the stewardess. An almost human smile dawned on her and she patted me on the arm. 'Sekt, Sekt.'

I was not quite sure what she meant, but a few moments later she came with a bottle of Crimean champagne and I understood. Sekt is the German word for champagne and she was obviously trying to serve me champagne in return for the lipstick. She then brought a platter of thickly sliced salami sausage, pickled onions and bread and butter. The salami and bread were excellent but did not improve the champagne, which tasted sweet and horrible.

The country beneath us was flat and grey, and when it grew dark the stewardess came around, turned on the individual reading lights and drew the curtains, admonishing us not to open them until arrival in Moscow. I thought innocently that this was done to prevent the pilot from losing his night vision. Later I was corrected when it was explained that this is done to forestall any secret observation of Moscow's defense installations.

After we arrived at the airport we went through passport inspection and customs. My visa was stamped and I was asked whether I carried any magazines. "Yes," I said, "a Time Magazine." That was the end of my magazine, which was promptly taken from me. Next I had to declare the foreign currency I carried with me and this was entered on a currency declaration form, which had to be used every time one exchanged funds. Providentially I failed to register about a hundred dollars in five-dollar notes that I carried in my trouser pocket.

It was now half past nine and the waiting representative of the Ministry of Foreign Trade packed me into a taxi. We had the long ride from the Vnukovo airport to the National Hotel in the middle of Moscow. We went through its revolving door and a set of heavy red velvet drapes designed to keep out the cold. The entry archway was supported by pillars which had nude figures carved into them. My ministerial escort delivered me to the front desk and

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made some explanation. I was divested of my passport and shown to a mediocre room on the third floor. It had no view and had obviously not been updated since the days of Lenin.

'Oil the wheel, oil the wheel' said a small voice in my brain. On my floor at a desk in front of the lift sat the 'etage controlleur'. Another sour woman whose job it was to check all movements in and out of the rooms and up and down via the staircase or elevator. I rode down and saw her pick up the phone, no doubt to report my departure from the floor to the control authorities somewhere in the bowels of the hotel. It was now late and there was no one at the front desk. I rang a bell and an angry looking man came out of an office.

"Do you speak English? I asked.

"Nix, nix." was the answer.

"Sprechen Sie Deutsch?"

"Wenig," came the reply.

That was good enough for me. I explained that I was an American who had come at the invitation of the government. I had important conferences with the Ministry of Trade about construction of factories. I had been assured of a bed AND living room to conduct my negotiations and that I would lodge an official complaint with the minister. I could just as well have told him that I would beat him with a wet noodle. He was not the least interested in my threats and only wanted to get back to his room to continue whatever he had been doing.

I switched over to plan 'B' and leaning closer to him pulled out a pack of nylon stockings and slid them across the desk.

"I brought these from America. You give them to a girlfriend and give me a small suite." If lightning had struck him he could not have changed more. The stockings disappeared in a flash beneath the counter. A conspiratorial smile lit up his face and gathering up a key from the board behind him, asked me to follow him. We went up to the mezzanine and into a suite located directly above the hotel entrance. It overlooked Red Square, with Lenin's tomb to the right and what I later learned was the Gum Department Store, to the left. In the distance was St. Basil's Cathedral.

The furniture was pseudo *Louis Quinze* with a large fireplace and fine pieces of porcelain. Obviously the rooms had not been used for a while and were dusty, but there was a clean bedroom and an adjoining bathroom.

I really felt that I had to do better than the one-dollar stockings I had given to the receptionist and, folding up a five-dollar bill, pressed it into his palm when I offered to shake hands with him. He was not used to these foreign ways. He looked into his hand at the little piece of green paper as if to wonder how it got there. Took it out and opened it up, looked at the U.S. five-dollar note and gushed a lot of Russian words. I held up my hands in the gesture of: Enough, Enough. Now if I could only get him to arrange to bring down my luggage I would be all set for the next three weeks which I expected I would have to

spend in Moscow.

The next morning was a clear but still cold day and for the next several weeks. I followed a routine of being picked up at the hotel by my 'interpreter', a young university student, called Larissa Saborova. Each day she accompanied me to and from every meeting. The interpreters were assigned to one visitor and mine spent every free minute interrogating me about American politics, life in the United States and my own impressions of the Soviet Union.

I met the American Ambassador Mr. Llewelyn Thompson and made sure that the Embassy was fully conversant with our work in the USSR. We were particularly grateful for his assurance that in case of any medical problems we could call on the Embassy's own medical staff, Dr. David Langdon, a captain in the U S Army.

The evenings in Moscow were very lonely and dull. I had been sufficiently warned about young ladies who would approach me to make a date and try to get me involved in something illegal or unsavory and then blackmail me by threatening to notify my family. The only safe evening's entertainment were the movies screened alternately in the America House Club on Kropotkinskaya Nabereznaya, the staff recreation quarters of the American Embassy or at its British equivalent. The distances were too far to walk and taxis had to be pre-ordered to assure a ride home. I only had to walk home twice and will always remember the old women, equipped with long handled brooms. They worked during the late hours and swept the rubbish from the sidewalks unto the street for the mechanized sprinklers and sweepers to clean up after them.

Another feature peculiar to Moscow were the center lanes of the boulevards reserved for ministerial and police cars. Every so often sirens would wail and a black ZIS limousine would shoot down the middle of the street on its way to some important engagement. All traffic came to a halt for them. I was told that the drivers of the limousine had an electronic device allowing them to switch the traffic lights of cross streets to red giving them unobstructed right of way.

Everything was rationed in the Soviet Union. I had been assigned the hotel room. The meals, however, were not included and I had separate coupons for breakfast, lunch and dinner. These could only be used in restaurants for foreigners and had an overall value for one meal, regardless of what and how much one ordered. There were also two Gastronome stores just around the corner from my hotel where Russian caviar could be purchased. I had been told that four meal coupons plus about twenty dollars U.S. would purchase one kilo of black Beluga caviar. That meant that I would have to eat four meals in a non-foreign restaurant to save the meal coupons for the Gastronome shop. There were a number of first class restaurants named after Soviet provinces specializing in those regional dishes. I ate Mongolian, Georgian, Uzbekian and Kazakhistanian food and presto had spare vouchers for caviar.

In one of the government licensed antique shops I bought a small 'caviar spoon' made of mother of pearl. These were used at the Czarist court and specially carved for imperial guests. The reason for these spoons, I had been told, was

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that the silver spoons turned black. An interesting story but not very plausible. No matter, I now had my spoon and caviar. I always placed the precious blue tin outside the double windows to keep it cold. With my appetite it did not last too long.

I owned a Leica camera with a standard fifty-millimeter lens that could be exchanged for one with a different focal length. I had heard that at the Gum Department Store I could buy other lenses at a very low price. These were manufactured by Leitz in Jena (the Russian occupied part of Germany) but had to be paid for in Valuta (foreign currency).

One free afternoon my interpreter took me to view Lenin's tomb. There were thousands of Russians lined up day and night in a never-ending queue for a look at their beloved embalmed leader. Being a foreigner visiting Moscow, gave me special privileges and we were simply pushed into the line at the head. The inside of the tomb was perfectly air conditioned and the waxen image of the dead Russian leader in his glass coffin with four unblinking Soviet soldiers standing at attention holding their bayoneted rifles upside-down was quite spectacular. Once back outside we walked across Red Square. This was a perfect opportunity to go shopping at Gum. We went to the entrance where my interpreter enquired about the camera lenses. We were sent to the third floor and, lo and behold, there were hundreds of Leica lenses jumbled together like potatoes in a bin; close up, wide angle and telephoto and not another customer. I sorted through the heap, selected a wide angle and a telephoto lens and carefully inspected both for any visible flaws in the mounting or glass.

The prices for the lenses were marked in pounds and dollars and the two selected items came to a total of twenty-eight dollars. Once I had made the purchase the salesman extracted from beneath the counter two first-class leather boxes that fitted the lenses and were part of the price. Paying in foreign money was always a chore. Once the purchase was made I received a sales slip setting out the price in rubles and the displayed foreign price. Next I went to the Valuta desk on a different floor to hand in the sales slip and the foreign currency together with my passport and the foreign currency declaration form. The amount paid was then deducted from the total declared and the form stamped by the shop. The sales slip was also stamped paid and could now be taken back to the third floor to pick up the purchase. It took time but assured that no foreign exchange could enter the black market.

My foreign currency form now showed \$20 for caviar, \$18 for the spoon and \$28 for the lenses. When I finally left Moscow, accompanied by my ministerial friends, no one collected the form or checked the amount of dollars I took back with me.

I wanted to have one "Great" Russian meal while in Moscow. The most highly touted restaurant was one that also required payment in foreign currency. Tsentralnaia on Gorky Street goes back to the Czarist days when it was a cafe and only frequented by the Russian elite. It was still beautifully decorated with much gold paint, gold colored curtains, crystal chandeliers, white tablecloths

and fat white-frocked waitresses. I love Chicken Kiev served with rice and found it almost as good as Chicken Kiev served with rice in any of a dozen restaurants anywhere in the world.

The ministry had secured ballet tickets for me. I am not really into opera and ballet but in deference to the hosts who assured me that the prima ballerina was outstanding, gritted my teeth and stood ready and waiting when the taxi came to take me to the ballet. The first thing I noticed was that the conductor wore a soft shirt and collar with his tails and white tie. I snuggled into the fourth row seat, just off the center aisle and awaited the happenings. For about one hour a large group of people cavorted around the stage, leaping and bounding against an enormous backdrop of paintings of red tractors gathering in the harvest. After intermission we were to see the classical ballet Giselle with a prima ballerina. Her name meant nothing to me but I am sure she danced divinely. I had nothing to compare her with but thought she was quite old.

Towards the end of my visit when most legal points had been agreed upon, the people from the ministry decided to give a party in our honor. Two of our technical vice-presidents had come out from White Plains to assist in the negotiations. The party was being held in one of the governmental establishments. While we milled around in an anteroom several toasts were drunk with the special vodka, reserved for the government functions. Finally we were called in to sit down for our meal. The opportunity to participate in one of these Government dinners is of course a special treat for any public servant. Vodka flows like water and although only the guests and the minister's representative are served with the black Beluga caviar, all other guests get at least a chance to taste the Sevruga variety.

I must admit that, this being the successful conclusion of our sometimes quite abusive negotiations, I felt very much like celebrating. While we stood around the white-jacketed waiters served the iced vodka, we clinked glasses and sipped the drinks. The moment we sat down at the table the routine changed. The head of the ministerial delegation raised his glass in my direction and drank to my health in one gulp. I raised my glass in his direction, wished him good health, and tossed down my drink. Almost immediately the second man of the delegation drank to my health and I returned the toast. Then the third and the fourth. I wondered when this would stop and counted that there were a total of twelve delegates. We were three on our side and by the time I exchanged toasts with number five, number one had started on our number two. Food started to arrive. We were served Beluga caviar in generous dollops with none of that nasty grated onion or other bits of stupid garnish to interfere with the culinary enjoyment of the extravagant dish.

That was followed by some meat inside a pastry with more toasts to the health of all and sundry. I know champagne was served because I had suggested that it could be mixed with vodka. By that time I was totally inebriated. I loved the whole world and how better to express my affection than to accompany my words with deeds.



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"We will always remain friends and will crush our enemies like I crush this glass," I declared.

I do not remember what I meant by that, (it was relayed to me the following day), but I put my hand around the bowl of the glass I was holding and crushed it. There was a deadly silence after that. Then our Russian friends jumped up, I was congratulated, embraced and hugged and dragged off to the men's room where water was left running over my bleeding hand to remove as many glass splinters as possible. I have no memory of further events. The next morning I had a bandaged hand and to this day have the fine glass-cut scars in the palm of my right hand.

Once the contract was signed I returned home and after that visited the Soviet Union four more times. I always felt sorry for the people, was very careful what I said and did and kept my distance from the local people to prevent them from getting into trouble by fraternizing with me. In all the time I spent in the USSR I was never invited to, or visited a private home. Things certainly changed since that time.

The second trip was in November 1958. By that time we had established our own offices in the Hotel Ukraina. Our permanent office manager supervised our field offices at Kursk and Ryazan out of Moscow. With both factories operating our clients had more confidence in me and visits by night train to the plant sites were no longer curtailed, although always supervised. It was not until later that I learned that Ryazan in Byelorussia was the home of the infamous *Spetsnaz* training camp with the grandiose motto: "Prepare to Sacrifice Yourself in the Name of your Socialist Motherland". I wondered how many of the several thousand workers and staff of the synthetic fibers complex we were building, were discarded former soldiers and officers of the regiments trained to become specialists in terrorism and assassinations.

Kursk was the birthplace of Krushchev and much was made of the fact that the fiber industry was being located there. The erection of the chemical machinery proceeded on schedule and at the end of a most successful visit with the directors and senior staff of the project, a dinner party was given in my and the Von Kohorn staff's honor. All fifty-two of our foreign experts, were invited and vodka flowed freely, with many toasts drunk to the health of all, to future friendly cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union and to peace in the world.

Again I wanted to express my slightly alcohol befuddled affection for our Soviet hosts in a more positive manner. Having only recently seen the Cossacks perform one of their magnificent Russian dances, I asked all guests to step back, while I would perform for them. It resulted in a very amateurish, but sincere attempt to emulate the dancers. I folded my arms across my chest, squatting down kicking one leg after the other straight out, until I finally fell, amidst roaring laughter and good-natured banter of all present. I was hugged to many manly chests and kissed by several full bearded officials, thanking me for my expression of 'mutual understanding'.

My first encounter with Russian speeches and formalities resulted in an amusing incident. General Klentsov, the top negotiator of the Soviet team when we first entered into talks with Technomashimport, gave a dinner in our honor in Moscow. I had been told many times that our Soviet clients would attempt to brainwash us all into believing in the communist doctrines. Trying to be funny, but half seriously attempting to forestall any political pressure, and no doubt to the embarrassment of the other Von Kohorn negotiators, I raised my glass to the General and said:

"If you promise not to try and convert us to communism, I promise that I shall not attempt to convert the Russians to capitalism." Fortunately it was accepted by the General in the humorous vein I had intended. He translated my little speech for the benefit of the non-English speaking Russians with roaring laughter. I became known as the American who would try to convert Russia to capitalism. Today these incidents do not seem to be very special. Forty years ago they bordered on subversion.

When we were led into our suite and had settled in, I admired the two magnificent pure white vases placed to the right and left of the mantelpiece. As soon as we were alone I pulled a chair to the fireplace and looked at the vases more closely. I took off the lid of one to look inside for a hallmark. As a collector of china I was familiar with the date marks of the Meissen crossed sword marks and recognized the vases as two of the very early imperial design pieces that had been made by the Dresden plant for the Russian Czar.

Very excitedly I called my wife over to look at the porcelain and exclaimed something like: "Look at these idiots. They have two of the most expensive pieces of chinaware and leave them sitting here on a mantle piece where they can easily be broken." We talked about it for a while and then got ready to go downstairs to the hotel dining room. Returning to our room, about an hour later, we looked at the mantelpiece, now minus the two white Meissen vases, looked at each other, and burst out laughing. If there was ever any question of the rooms being 'bugged', the prompt removal of the porcelain pieces, after my enthusiastic outburst was the best proof. I only hope the two Meissen treasures were taken to a museum where they belonged, and not to a Moscow hotel guest suite.

## **BOATING IN AUSTRALIA**

My closest friend and associate in Sydney was Douglas Wyndham Watt, a CPA, who also looked after my business affairs in Australia. Al Daff, former head of Universal Pictures, introduced us to him. Doug arranged the purchase of some land for Henry and myself. The intention was to use the land for a nylon factory

Doug and Millicent owned the immaculate forty-foot launch *Naiad II*. The boat was usually moored at Church Point in Pittwater. In December 1958 Diana

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visited Australia with our children and on a Sunday Diana and I were invited to accompany Doug and his wife on an outing on *Naiad II*. We parked the car on the side of the road near some boatsheds, unloaded the baskets of food and drink, unchained the dinghy stored in one of the old sheds and dropped it in the water. While our wives waited on the jetty, Doug and I rowed out to the mooring and climbed aboard the boat. As soon as the door was unlocked, Doug started the blower to air out the engine room. *Naiad* was a day boat. It was driven by two powerful petrol engines and had a most spacious entertaining area and well equipped galley.

As soon as the automatic gas-alarm switched from red to a green signal, Doug started the engines and I cast off the heavy mooring chain from the forward bollard. We would come alongside the wharf and our wives dutifully took the forward and aft lines and made *Naiad* fast. It never took much time to load the provisions on board and sometimes we waited for other friends or family members to arrive for the cruise.

Once the side and rear awnings of the boat were rolled up, the chairs placed in the cockpit and the Volunteer (now Royal) Coastal Patrol burgee, and the *Nemesis* flag, hoisted on the mast we were ready to leave. Doug at the wheel always slid very slowly through the mooring area and never failed to point out *Krait* the coastal patrol vessel supported by a National Memorial Fund.

Doug's vessel bore the number 33, carried forward from his previous boat, the *Heron*. He had been the first of the original subscribers to the Memorandum of Association that founded the Patrol in June 1963. I had officially been made an 'Honorary Skipper' of the organization from its inception and entitled to fly the patrol's burgees on my vessel overseas. Whenever possible I visited the NSW headquarters and soon became known to my fellow skippers

This particular Sunday the forecast had been for fine weather and it was only about ten o'clock when we cleared the other moored boats and cruised out into the long arm reaching in from the sea that makes up Pitt Water. Today we would visit Coaster's Retreat where Doug maintained a private mooring and, on top of the tide, slip across the shoal and into The Basin. Chart AUS 133 showed a depth of almost ten meters in the anchorage but the entrance was only about half a meter deep and could only be negotiated with utmost care and very accurate local knowledge.

Pitt Water is blocked by Scotland Island lying squarely in the middle. Southeast is Island Inlet, home of two of Sydney's important yacht clubs; Green Point with Royal Prince Alfred and a few hundred meters north, the Royal Motor Yacht Club. We left Scotland Island to our starboard and headed north past the huge pontoons which make up the prohibited naval anchorage area extending past Stripe Point where we passed yet another large yacht club.

Leaving Portuguese Bay to port, we soon rounded Soldiers Point and headed west. Along the coast luscious vegetation grew above the rocky cliffs on the west of Pitt Water while the east side was dotted with elaborately kept estates and magnificent homes that extended down to the water's edge. Long Beach

and Snapperman Beach must surely contain some of the most beautiful residences in close proximity to the open sea and easily reached through Broken Bay only a few miles northward.

Lion Island is located in the mouth of Broken Bay just north of where the Hawkesbury River flows into the sea and at the confluence with Brisbane Water. Shaped like a resting lion it is uninhabited, a native reserve and almost one hundred meters high.

While we were slowly cruising up the inlet, the ladies had changed into bathing suites and bikinis and were now stretched out on deck in the sun. The day was beautiful and both Doug and I were anxious to get out of the cabin and on deck. In this kind of weather I appreciated the advantage of *Columbia* with a flying bridge.

Before too long we headed west into the bay that leads to Coaster's Retreat. There were a few center board yachts in the basin and as we approached the shoal Doug reduced down to a drifting speed and with the engine out of gear slid slowly across the sandbar, clearly visible beneath the boat. Once inside Doug headed for his mooring that consisted of a large tire and a convenient mooring line made up to fit over *Naiad's* bollard.

Protected from the wind we basked in the hot weather and shortly after were glad to escape from the sun and help set the table inside the cabin to prepare for our picnic lunch.

## THE BAHAMAS

In 1959 we opened an office in the Bahamas to employ the large number of drafting staff we needed. I flew to Nassau on 2 July on a Britannia of Bahamas Airways, arriving in the early afternoon. Bill Keenan was the manager of Bahama Airways and he looked after me when I checked in at the Emerald Beach Hotel. We had decided in White Plains to work with the Bank of London and Montreal, the correspondent of our New York bankers and also with the Nassau office of Barclays, our bankers in London. They put me in touch with the H. G. Christie Real Estate Company and I called on them immediately after arrival. The next morning I started to visit various properties accompanied by Frank Christie, the proprietor and Tom Plummer, one of the sales staff who had been assigned to look after our interests.

Our need was for residential space to house the engineering and drafting staff and office space to set up a drafting office, preferably not too far apart or too far outside the town. Soon my search for the residences came down to a recently closed small hotel and, for the office, the second floor of a large car dealer on West Bay Street.

Our lawyers in New York had recommended that we use Stafford L. Sands (later Sir Stafford) as our local attorney and we met at his office at 309 Bay

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Street. The front of his building was covered with hundreds of small wooden nameplates, each showing the name of a company he represented in the Bahamas, his address being the registered office of his clients. Since our company was registered in Panama we did not have to incorporate and it only needed the approval of the Bahamian government to allow us to operate in Nassau. Anthony Rickett, a partner of Mr. Stafford Sands' was designated to look after me and efficiently carried out the legal work. Tony and his wife, Camillie, showed me around Nassau and introduced me to Leo Rost, an entrepreneur and owner of two famous tourist restaurants and nightclubs, Blackbeard's and the Junkaroo. Both establishments featured Caribbean bands and were crowded with eager tourists trying to dance the limbo, guzzling rum drinks and listening to the wonderful Caribbean music.

Two of the most important items needed were the installation of adequate air-conditioning in the new office area and communication facilities to our White Plains and London offices. In order to telephone, we had to connect with Miami operator No. 74 who then connected us with the other party. Calls from the USA also went through the Miami Operator and lengthy delays were the norm, not the exception.

I signed an agreement with Robbin Baxter, owner of Caribbean Motors Limited, for the lease of the brand new second floor space above his car showroom. I then placed an order immediately with R. G. McConnell, general manager of the Bahamas Supply Airconditioning Limited, for the installation of York equipment capable of handling the cooling of the area in the extreme heat and humidity of Nassau. Being tenants of the car dealer had its advantages. He could be counted on to rent to us cars, at a reasonable rate, which could be used by our staff for their leisure activities.

My next stop was with the telecommunications department of the Bahamian government where I signed an agreement for the supply and installation of necessary telephone and teletype equipment. Miss Bethel Knowles, a Bahamian lady, was the manager. She thanked me for having called on her personally and assured me that we would have fully operating equipment within seven days. A promise that was kept with ease, since we had one phone and one teletype operational within one day, the remaining equipment installed by the week's end.

Next I had to make sure that drafting tables and the plan printing equipment would be operative by the time our staff arrived. The cost of those items, when new and imported from the States was exorbitant and I contacted our White Plains Office to find out whether it was possible to simply pack up our furniture and equipment in the States and ship it to Nassau. McCartney Thompson Company Limited was highly recommended as the best to handle the importation and I sat with their vice-president, Dewitt Thompson, to discuss the requirement of licenses and permits to import our own used equipment. On my suggestion both of us then called on Mr. E. H. McKinney, the Bahamian Comptroller of Customs. After giving the necessary explanations, we were assured that this secondhand furniture could be brought in and used without

having to pay import duty, but could not be sold locally. I was quickly on the phone, back to White Plains, "Ship the items immediately".

At the offices of Christie Real Estate I met with Mr. W. G. Elcock, the proprietor of the Drake Hotel. With the help of Thomas Plummer the manager of Christie Real Estate I persuaded him to grant us a three-month lease on his entire hotel. The Drake was to supply breakfast and the necessary staff for servicing the eighteen rooms. The hotel was to get a quick spruce up and later Bill was to assist our staff in finding their own housing and accommodations during the three-month lease period. The Drake was located along the beachfront and once our staff had arrived, they adopted working hours most convenient for each. That meant that many chose to go swimming early in the morning, work during the hottest time in air conditioned comfort and return to the beach in the afternoon.

With Nassau primarily a tourist center, the cost of living was correspondingly high. To give our engineering staff some inexpensive leisure time I arranged for the long-term charter of a thirty-foot fishing boat called the *MAO MAO*, captained by Albert Kelly and equipped with two fighting chairs. Al would take up to six of our staff at a time out on the boat. The assignments for the use of the boat were made by our office manager on a daily basis to fit in with the 'glide-time' work schedule.

Having completed these arrangements, I returned to New York on British Airways on July sixth 1959.

On my return visit I brought with me a long list of office requirements and talked with Fred Deal, president of General Equipment Limited, who agreed to work with us on a monthly basis. The draftsmen would require excellent lighting and Nassau Engineering took on the task of installing fluorescent fittings to light the entire floor area on a uniform basis. By that time the ordered partitions and wall fittings were being installed. I also arranged a meeting with Roy Kemp, partner of Peat, Marwick, Mitchell and Company, the local offices of the accounting firm we employed in all Commonwealth countries. Don Britchford who was appointed our accountant would handle the routine work. He set up our local books and control of funds as well as supervision of expenditures.

Through the years I learned that a personal call on offices of organizations with which we had regular dealing gave us the edge over other customers and usually resulted in improved services. Transportation was important, particularly when, during the tourist season, every airplane seat was often filled and it required the assistance of airline management for one of our staff to be squeezed onto a full flight. George Hambleton was the local manager of Pan American Airways and we spent two evenings together discussing our passenger requirements and the pros and cons of twice daily flights from New York directly, or via Miami with its dozens of daily flights.

Camillie Ricketts, the wife of our lawyer Tony, ran her own company, Victoria Enterprises, which looked after out-of-the-ordinary requirements for tourists. She arranged to have such things as flowers or an Arabic newspaper delivered,



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a specialty meal cooked or servants recruited for local homeowners. She and her husband became indispensable to us and all that had dealings with the pair found them invaluable.

I returned again to New York on July twenty-sixth, with everything set up and ready for our staff. I did not go back to the Bahamas until 28 April 1960. I stayed until May third and was able to observe the well running and efficiently operating engineering offices of our new company, Von Kohorn Eastern Corporation in Nassau.

## BOOMERANG

In 1959 Diana and I discussed the acquisition of a small motor cruiser. Eleven years previously I had been a guest on the yacht of the Fortabats, and Diana and I had made the trip in the Philippines on Aranetas' ocean going vessel. To come to some sort of decision we decided to go to the annual boat show, held at the purposely-built indoor exhibition center at Columbus Circle in New York. It was towards the end of the weeklong show and many exhibitors had started to dismantle their stands.

In the middle of the displays was the exhibits centerpiece, a 30 foot Chris Craft with twin 225 horsepower inboard petrol engines and a flying bridge. She was beautiful and we both agreed that this was the boat we would be happy with.

Always a person who made up his mind on the spot I asked the salesman when the exhibited vessel would be available. I was told that because of the closing of the exhibit she would have to be removed that night. I made an offer for the boat that I thought reasonable, and was considerably less than the price shown on the display sign. There was a lot of telephoning between the salesman and the local boat distributor. With the proviso that I would remove the display that night, my offer was accepted. The salesman arranged for the exhibit's movers to pick up the boat and deliver it to a nearby boatyard for temporary storage.

The next few hours were spent providing a check to pay for the purchase, prepaying for the transporter, making a deposit for the storage, and above all we hired Frank, the salesman, as our instructor and possibly as our future captain.

We were terribly lucky with Frank. He proved to be completely honest, enjoyed teaching us and above all did the many things needed when commissioning a new vessel. There was insurance, arrangement for long term storage, purchase of all the items required, charts, radio, etc. We could never have managed without Frank.

The following week, I was able to obtain jetty space at the marina in Mamaroneck, only about fifteen minutes from our home in White Plains. To find marina space was not easy. To find it within such a short distance was a

miracle. We were even able to negotiate for two parking places, just a few feet away from our jetty. Later we put permanent connections on our jetty for water and the ubiquitous telephone lines. A special bonus was the immediate vicinity of the well known Mamaroneck ship chandlery, Brewers, who carried everything from burgees to cotter pins, outboard engines to sails.

Combining our two names gave me the brilliant idea to call our boat *DIARAL*. My brother, when told, queried whether this was not too close to *Diarrhea*? So on second thought we decided instead to call her *Boomerang*.

I immediately joined a class at the White Plains High School, studying seamanship and navigation. The school was providentially across the street from my home on North Street. I attended all classes and after passing the exams was entitled to join the Westchester District of the United States Power Squadron. This was my first serious connection with all things nautical. I later passed further stages of maritime studies and at a ceremony received my diploma as a member of the Squadron. The following year I was appointed an educational officer and a lieutenant.

Early in 1962 I read in an American yachting magazine of a request for assistance in establishing an Australian Coast Guard. The request was submitted to the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary. Subsequently the Australian Ambassador to the United States, Sir Howard Beale, presented the US Coast Guards Auxiliary with the Australian Coast Guard ensign. Sir Howard was an old family friend of my in laws and knew of my interest in yachting. I obtained all necessary information about ACG from him and was able to contact the National Vice-Commodore (NAVCO), E. S. Madden in Melbourne and on his suggestion applied for membership, in spite of the fact that our cruiser *Boomerang* was in Mamaroneck, Long Island, New York and not in Australia.

Three conditions were placed on my obtaining membership in the Australian organization. Qualification in seamanship, passing a Coast Guard inspection of our vessel and a pledge that we would always operate our boat in strict compliance with the law. Subject to qualifying, I could be enrolled. A month later I was able to advise NAVCO Madden that our vessel had passed inspection and forwarded the official certificate from the US Coast Guard to the Australian Coast Guard. I had been able to have *Boomerang* allocated registration number NY5000AU. The NY was for New York, 5000 for a special number and AU for an Australian wife. Copies of my recently obtained certificates from the United States Power Squadron for navigation and piloting together with my official membership application were forwarded to the Australian Coast Guard.

By late July news arrived that the application had been accepted and that the documents would be forwarded shortly. I was now on the way to becoming a fully-fledged member. Together with the advice came the request to act as liaison officer between the ACG and the USCGA.

This proved to be somewhat of an embarrassment. I was a member of the United States Power Squadron, a similar organization as the USCGA, but could

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not, in good faith, represent both organizations. I therefore suggested to the ACG that I would be pleased to act as liaison officer with the USPS but not the USCGA. On 26 September my appointment was confirmed. I held the rank of a lieutenant since I was the Educational Officer of the Westchester Squadron. During the following months I acted as intermediary and educational material was exchanged between the two organizations. The official circular No. 9 of October 1962 stated under AII9/62: "Appointments. The following appointments are effective: As liaison officer with the U S Power Squadron: BM R.S.Von Kohorn." The BM preceding my name was the rank of Boat Master, granted to me by virtue of the US certification.

The November issue of the Australian Coast Guard newsletter carried the following item: 'We have mentioned RALPH VON KOHORN, who lives at 'Bishopstowe', 511 North Street, White Plains, New York. Ralph is a Boatmaster, ACG and the story of his enrolment is rather interesting. His wife, Diana, is an Australian, and they are both very enthusiastic unofficial ambassadors for Australia in the United States. When they applied to join the ACG, it raised a ticklish question, since their boat *Boomerang* operates in American Waters. After consultation with both USCGA Headquarters in Washington, it was decided to admit them to membership of the Australian Coast Guard provided they met the conditions specified by the US Coast Guard Auxiliary. Both had qualified in basic seamanship with the US Power Squadron. P/NACO Bliss Woodward, of the Auxiliary, arranged the vessel inspection, which *Boomerang* passed with flying colors. A member of his local Power Squadron, Ralph accepted the duties of our Liaison officer with the USPS.



Circular No 10 contained also the following information: AI42/62 APPOINTMENTS: Patrol Officer: R S Von Kohorn, and VI49/62 FACILITIES: The following vessels, having been inspected are listed as facilities of the Australian Coast Guard: CGC *Boomerang* NY5000AU R Von Kohorn U S Waters.

Together with this news came a letter from NAVCO Madden advising that in view of the fact that I was the only resident member of the ACG in the United States, I should carry a somewhat senior posting than a Patrol Officer on the list of Members at Large, and be posted to the National Headquarters as Staff-Commander. This, being an appointed staff position, would be junior to a Flotilla Commander. I accepted this appointment on 30 November. On 18 December I was appointed Liaison Officer by the Power Squadron with the rank of Lieutenant and forwarded my documents to the ACG.

In 1962 the Americas Cup races were held at Newport, Rhode Island and it was only natural to decide to take part in the activities. Diana, being an Australian, and our boat being called *Boomerang*, made it seem logical to become part of the Australian team for the Cup. The Australian Ambassador to the United States was a friend of Diana's family. We bathed in the honor of being appointed a 'gofer' boat for Gretel the Australian challenger. "Gofer" is the humorous appellation for a boat that is called on to "go for" a forgotten sail, or "go for" a bag of ice.

After successfully navigating along the west coast of Long Island Sound from Mamaroneck to Westport, and proudly flying the Australian Red Ensign, *Boomerang* was safely moored at the local Westport marina. At the Australian Head Quarters we found an invitation addressed to us to attend the Americas Cup Dinner held by President John Kennedy. (Thanks to the kind intervention of Ambassador Walker).

We were never called upon to do any gofering, but benefited from being able to accompany the racing fleet inside the spectator boats exclusion zone. On the last day of the challenge President Kennedy gave a most lavish party at one of the Newport 'cottages' and we were included in the list of guests attending the black tie evening function.

*Boomerang* was the perfect boat for a small family. Diana and I had the main cabin and the two children slept in the second cabin. The cockpit adjoined the wheelhouse so it was easy to supervise Karen and Kirk while the boat was moving. A fishing chair and seating made the cockpit a comfortable place when cruising. The flying bridge gave an unimpeded view and meant that the helmsperson was not distracted by the activities of the rest of the party.

Long Island Sound is a dream for boat owners. Along the shoreline are hundreds of small villages each with at least one restaurant located along the seafront. We had several "favorites", each with private jetties, restaurants and bars. Many were equipped to accept reservations via telephone. Often I would phone home from my office and arrange to meet Diana at the marina with our children. We would set out in the late afternoon, radio ahead to a selected



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restaurant and cross to the east coast.

"This is Boomerang. We should be along side in 18 minutes. Can we have two frozen daiquiris on the jetty, two meals for children to go aboard and two reservations for the dining room."

We never failed to change into white slacks/skirt and blue blazer before stepping ashore. The Daiquiris would be waiting when a boat boy took the lines. The headwaiter would do his best, having been discretely greased by a five dollar bill.

After dinner, once back aboard Boomerang, the children were put to sleep in their cabin and we would



cruise back to Mamaroneck, then carry the tots to the cars. The two cars were a nuisance but unavoidable with Diana and the children arriving from home and myself from the office. At that time one could not have asked for a better life.

In December 1962 I visited Westernport Bay, east of Port Phillip. We drove by car via the Princess Highway to Warneet, then south Gippsland Road and turned off on Pearcedale Road. We had been invited by W. A. Peterson, Chief Commodore of the ACGA (he later resigned in 1963) to come aboard his ship the *Webray*. Our host was interested in land development on Koolyn Island and wanted to show us some property with access to the sea and the possibility to build a private wharf. We made it clear that we had no interest in acquiring land near Melbourne, but were of course very happy to accept the invitation for a cruise in the bay. To our host's chagrin we ran aground and had to be transferred to shore by dinghy since the tide continued to fall and our timetable did not allow us to wait out the incoming tide. The 'grounding' furnished any proof we needed for why we did not want property on Koolyn Island.

## BULGARIA

By the early 1960's the political situation in Bulgaria had improved to such an extent that we wanted to investigate the feasibility of setting up a synthetic fiber

industry, similar to that we established and financed in Yugoslavia. In order to come to a decisive and quick conclusion we needed to undertake a personal investigation of possible locations, the availability of labor, water, and power and the disposal of effluents.

We called a number of our senior staff to meet my brother Henry and I at our office in Darmstadt in Germany. We had one of our American station wagons, seating nine, and took off for Sofia, Bulgaria's capital, via Austria and Yugoslavia. The wagon was a blue Ford Falcon, Connecticut license plate VKEC (Von Kohorn Eastern Corp.), and we agreed that all of us would have an opportunity to drive on the variety of roads leading deeply into the Balkans. Arrangements had been made for our visas to be available at the Bulgarian legation in Vienna, and we had little difficulty to have the U.S. and German passports properly stamped after paying an exorbitant visa charge.

Our team included Henry and I, Dr. Walter Munk head of our legal department, our chief chemist Dr. Moldenhauer, chief engineer Otto Köppe, and Günther Hillebrand a technician. The *Autobahn* from Beograd ended at Niš, where the



146kilometer road to Sofia started. We stopped at Dimitrovgrad, the Bulgarian border control point, where our passports were examined and stamped, car and luggage searched and that was our introduction to a new world.

One of the team had intended to use the border post toilet facilities and reappeared almost immediately holding his nose. He asked all of us to come and take a look at the ante-diluvial installation. A hole had been dug into the soil, never emptied and that was the extent of the toilet. We had been warned not to try and change money on the black market. Foreigners were often



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approached by *agent's provocateurs* to sell currency, and later arrested for violating the strict currency laws. Since our foreign bank notes had not been registered when we entered Bulgaria, we insisted on paying in German marks and US dollars, instead of Bulgarian lev. Even in the hotel we asked what the total bill amounted to in US currency and paid in dollars, no questions asked. That was a ruse that must have worked, since eventually we all left Bulgaria without having been arrested or fined. We left also with the unquestionable decision that we were not ready to invest in the country.

## INDONESIA 1961

In 1961 our economic gurus in White Plains determined that Indonesia was ripe for a man-made and synthetic fiber industry. The country was politically friendly with the USA, UK, Japan and Germany, our main machinery suppliers. Thus we could hope for favorable treatment when applying for export loans to Indonesia. An agent had been highly recommended to us and I arrived on the 6th of March 1961 in Djakarta from Singapore. Having only recently declared its independence from The Netherlands, the facilities for visitors were minimal. I was welcomed at the airport by our agent Tan Tsiong Kie, an Indonesian born Chinese from the Hunan province. He checked me into the only hotel in town, the Wisma that unfortunately was not air-conditioned. It had a large outdoor area, which served as its restaurant, and was shaded by lovely old trees.

After two days at the hotel, the Tan family took pity on me and I was invited to stay as a houseguest at their family home. A high stone fence, topped by bits of broken glass, set in concrete, surrounded the Tan compound. The wall enclosed the house, garages, tennis court and servants quarters. Tsiong Kie was married to Karola (half German, half Chinese) and they had three very young daughters and baby boy. As was the custom among higher-class families, there were a large number of servants, including a masseur, two chauffeurs, amahs, nannies, laundress, maids and cooks. My laundry was whisked away in the evening and reappeared miraculously in the morning, beautifully ironed. My shoes were polished and I was offered a deep (very painful) massage in the late afternoon.



## India and Pakistan

On this visit I had just enough time to meet the government officials with whom I would have to work. I was of course told all the latest stories about President Soekarno and the beautiful Japanese lady who was his constant companion.

I left Djakarta on 11th March for Singapore, flying in the BOAC Comet 4 jet, surprisingly twenty-five minutes slower than the PANAM Boeing 707, on which I had arrived.

My next arrival in Djakarta was on 10th July. In the meantime I had visited our Osaka office in Japan, the head office in White Plains, our Washington office in the United States, our operation at Sao Paulo in Brazil and our office in London. Any new business with Indonesia would

require the approval of loan facilities from the Import Export Bank in Japan, The Export Import Bank in Washington and the Export Credit Guarantee Department in London. My visit to the credit banks allowed me to make a preliminary assessment of the amount of difficulties we would encounter when applying for a major loan for Djakarta and the time span with which we would have to contend.

Tsiong Kie had been a supporter of President Soekarno and felt a visit to the palace would be beneficial to our negotiations. The President was very fond of shadow plays and Tsiong Kie arranged for me to receive an invitation to attend the next private palace performance. The show consisted of several independent and unconnected acts, starting quite late to assure darkness. In the palace garden a large white sheet was strung up and behind it the shadow play artists took their positions. There were a few adjustments of the kerosene pressure lamps to assure maximum brightness of the cutout figures and then the *gamelan* orchestra started its music. I was told that electric lights were too harsh and only the soft glow of pressure lamps would give the proper ambience required for the shadow play.

Our friend arranged for me to be seated next to Soekarno. When I was presented, I was surprised at the very pronounced Dutch accent of the fluent English speaking President. Later, when I asked about it, I was told that he had been educated in Holland and besides English, spoke German with complete fluency with the same Dutch accent. The President's favorite chanter

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commenced with the announcement of the show and the first shadows appeared on the screen, consisting of some ancient Indonesian gods fighting each other. The individual figures were cut out of cardboard and animal skin. The flat legs and arms were made of bamboo and thin wood, and heads and crowns fastened with hinges to permit independent movements. Some of the figures were antiques and the audience was of course able to recognize each character, greeting the shadow appearance with calls of welcome.

The technique of the puppet masters, who moved the limbs of the figures was superb and the cool outdoor evening air made the beginning of the performance a treat to watch. Being a Muslim country no alcohol was served in the palace, but servants in white uniforms, wearing the dark blue Indonesian cap, carried pitchers of very sweet iced fruit juices. They refilled our glasses as quickly as they were emptied. Soekarno, who was very proud of his artists, pointed out to me certain finer points of the shadow play and very kindly explained and translated some of the sung and chanted parts of the acts. After one hour of the performance was enough for me but the President enjoyed himself greatly. To my regret I had to sit until the bitter end, which only came after one o'clock in the morning, four and a half hours after the start of the performance.

Karola Tan collected hand-made *batiks*. Since each piece of fabric was different, she had accumulated a very large collection. The artists sometimes demonstrated the ancient art of producing the fabrics and I was taken along to one of those sessions. After a specific design was traced on a plain fabric, hot wax was poured from a tin with a tiny spout following the pattern. The fabric was then dipped into a dye, the hardened wax preventing the dye from covering the waxed area. Then the fabric is washed in boiling water to dissolve the wax leaving those areas with only the fabric's original color. Some *batiks* are multi-colored and represent several session of waxing, dying and washing. Today, some of these antique fabrics are priceless and Karola's collection was one of Indonesia's finest.

I left Djakarta for Manila on 28th July 1961 and did not return to Indonesia until the following year on 31st May. The purpose of that visit was to investigate the availability of locally produced cellulose raw materials. On 4th June I went on a short visit to Palembang on the island of Sumatra (Sumatera) returning to Djakarta on the sixth. Those short flights were on a Convair Metro of the Garuda Airways and both the power take offs and landings with screeching brakes were quite frightening experiences. Two days later I left for Singapore.

I had been intrigued by the strong nationalistic feelings that had caused the recent geographic name changes. They did not appear difficult; the Dutch Batavia had become Djakarta, Borneo was now Kalamantan, and Bandoeng, the former summer capital was now Bandung. Slowly the previous strong Dutch colonial influence disappeared and the powerful new nationalistic leadership continued the policy inaugurated at the start of Indonesian independence.

In those early days of political freedom, a great number of business transactions

could not be consummated without paying certain highly placed government officials, what the Chinese used to refer to as 'squeeze'. Nobody referred to these transactions as 'bribes', these were funds one paid to make the wheels turn smoother, or to receive the formal ministerial approval faster. The extraneous payments were normally included in the cost calculation and in the case of large industrial complexes were very large sums of money. The Export Import Bank in Washington, attempting to eliminate such practices, announced a new requirement. The applicant of an export loan was henceforth obligated to include a binding statement certifying that none of the loaned funds would in any form be used for the payment of bribes. We could in no way sign such a statement and the conclusion of an agreement became impossible.

My next visit to Indonesia was on 13th January 1963, when I flew in from Sydney via Darwin, to wind up and close down all previous negotiations. I stayed only until the seventeenth, when I continued on to Manila.

## THE YULOS IN NEW YORK

A close friendship had developed between Jose Yulo and my parents when they had been in the Phillipines. In the early 1960's the Yulos were at last able to spend some time with us in New York. We had several weeks notice of their arrival and made arrangements to take them to some new Broadway shows. Various friends were invited to meet them at a garden party and we fitted in a one or two hour cruise on *Boomerang*.

All preparations had been made for a leisurely luncheon and siesta at our home and then the limousine would take us to the boat harbor. We had planned to cruise slowly out of Mamaroneck Harbor, up the northern coast of Long Island Sound to enter Cos Cob Harbor, barely ten and a half miles away.

*Boomerang*, with twin Chrysler engines, cruised at around twenty-five miles per hour but as the distance was not great we intended to dawdle. We would arrive in time for our driver to collect us at the Mianus yacht yard and take us to one of Connecticut's famous country inns for cocktails and an unhurried meal. Diana and I would return to Mamaroneck on *Boomerang*, while the Yulos were driven to the Plaza Hotel in New York.

Every little detail of the plan had been carefully arranged. The dinner reservations made and confirmed, the chauffeur knew exactly at which wharf we would arrive on the Mianus river and we had timed the return from the restaurant to ensure that we would cruise back to Mamaroneck Harbor while still daylight.

It did not quite turn out that way. We had parked our car at the Mamaroneck Marina and rushed down to the floating jetty with ice cubes and hors d'oeuvres, and waited for the arrival of the Yulos. Minutes later the Cadillac arrived and Don Jose with Dona Cecilia walked down the ramp to the pier where

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*Boomerang* was tied up with her stern to the shore.

This marina provided outstanding facilities including connection to the public phone which was plugged into the boat, another plug connected the TV to the shore antenna, a hose screwed into the freshwater intake and a power line to operate all electrical equipment aboard while tied up to the wharf. These four individual connections were harnessed together into one trunk and unscrewed, unplugged and unpulled before casting off the stern and bow lines.

As soon as the Yulos had been helped aboard and settled in the main cabin, I went aft to unhitch the tethers. There was no problem with the phone, electric plugs and the antenna lead, but the water hose would not unscrew. After tugging and pulling for a while I looked for a wrench and started to attack the obstinate connection. Five minutes passed.

“Oh Ralph. Everything alright back there?”

“Oh sure. We'll be leaving right away. Just casting off.”

I started to swear under my breath. The misbegotten screw fitting would not come apart. There was only one thing to do. The tap on the jetty was turned off and with a large knife I sliced through the hose to free us.

The engines started without trouble and the lines were quickly dropped. Both tanks showed full and the motors sounded sweet as we carefully pulled out from our berth.

“Would you like to come up to the flying bridge? You get a much better view from up here,” I called down.

The Yulos were in their mid sixties and the ladder to the flying bridge was designed more for the mid thirties age group. Being good sports Don Jose made a brave attempt to help push Dona Cecilia up the ladder. She easily reached the top and sat to my left on the low bench. Unfortunately when Don Jose had scaled about half the ladder he slipped on the stainless steel rungs and slid down rather abruptly hitting his chin a walloping whack. He staggered back somewhat groggily and collapsed into one of the chairs in the cockpit.

“Could I possibly have a glass of water?” he called to the First Mate who was still busy in the main cabin with the canapés and drinks.

“Coming right up,” and a glass of soda water was passed out to the cockpit.

Up on the flying bridge I had not realized the little drama that occurred down below. Only when our guest failed to appear did I suspect something. Then I had to do some strategic planning on how to get Cecilia down the ladder while steering the boat. I called to the First Mate:

“Will you take the controls below while I help Cecilia down?”

Getting an elderly lady, wearing a dress down a slippery ladder while cruising in a busy harbor with heavy traffic was a challenge. It was clear that I could not climb down first and help her from below. It would be equally difficult to help

from above. The logical solution was for me to take the controls again and have the First Mate assist from below.

After a few anxious minutes Cecilia was safely ensconced in another of the cockpit chairs and commiserating with her husband over his mishap while he tried to buck up her spirit by assuring her that the cruise would not take very long.

"Gosh. I need a drink. Will you get me something up on the flying bridge please," I called down.

"I think we will be better off if you take the wheel down here. We'll all be together and we can both look after our friends," came the rather strained reply from Diana.

That was an excellent suggestion and I quickly slid down the handrails of the ladder; the usual way to get down to the cockpit if you were in a hurry. I had never had the least amount of trouble and had perfected this showy exercise as a stunt.

Except this time my left trouser leg caught in one of the rungs and I heard and felt the fabric tear as I landed on deck.

"Oh my. I'm afraid I tore my trousers," I said out loud. I thought something quite different. "Excuse me while I quickly change."

Show off! I had one spare pair of pants aboard in case I was only dressed in my working slacks and wanted to go ashore unexpectedly. As I passed our little bar I grabbed the bottle of brandy and poured myself a stiff drink. Here we were not even out of the harbor and had already had three incidents. This was going to be some evening.

When I came back to the wheelhouse the Yulos were comfortably seated and the First Mate had things under control.

"Well, I'm ready to take over again," I announced. "We'll have a nice run up the coast and I shall point out all the interesting sights on the way."

We had just passed Ship Rock buoy and I was headed for the big fat '42' to make the turn to nor'east and up the coast. Although not a weekend, the beautiful weather had drawn many boat owners out on the water of the Sounds and there were boats everywhere. Outside the five fathom line the water was fairly smooth and only rippled with a light wind.

In order to show as much as possible of the beautiful foreshore, I stayed inside Foggy Shoal and hugged Rye Beach bell, steering carefully between Jones Rock and Great Captain Islands.

A look at the clock showed that we had only been under way for twenty minutes and it was just too early to arrive at Mianus.

"I'll show you what *Boomerang* can do," I called out happily. Rushing up the ladder to the flying bridge, I pushed both throttles fully forward and could feel the tremendous surge of power as the boat jumped forward when both



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propellers bit hard into the water. We were almost immediately planing and the bow slapped merrily as we jumped from wavelet to wavelet with spray flying everywhere. The noise was quite considerable. I was looking for the black marker near the Hen and Chickens to clear and then turn inside 'No. 1' bell for the run back past Wee and Little Captain Islands. The First Mate's voice shouted into my ear rather hysterically from the flying bridge ladder.

"You better slow down fast. You have two very scared and slightly seasick people down below."

I pulled the throttles back instantaneously. A cry of horror wafted up from the cockpit as the noise stopped suddenly and *Boomerang's* nose dropped sharply when she settled down into the horizontal position and the next moment the stern rose sharply when our own wake passed under us.

"I promise he will not do it again. We'll just cruise very slowly now and head straight for the wharf at Mianus," came the First Mate's assurances. This was turning out a complete mess. Once again I descended from the flying bridge, sedately, in deference to the trousers, making my apologies to the shaking Yulos.

They were taking it all with good grace and declined a drink to settle their nerves. At this stage my nerves needed steadying and I tossed back a generous brandy that did not seem to have much effect.

We were practically idling when we made the run along the 'measured mile' and I explained to our guests the method of determining a boat's speed by measuring the time it takes to pass from one marker to the next. Cecilia and Joe could not have cared less. Pale and still trembling they sat stiffly in the boat chairs and nodded acquiescence to my explanations of the interesting points we were passing on the foreshore.

I now rounded Great Captain Island and Cormorant Reef and headed for Cos Cob harbor. Things had settled down. In the water behind the islands two large steamers lay at anchor in what is known as Captain Harbor, but what can hardly be described as a protected anchorage.

Once again we attempted to interest our friends in some hors d'oeuvres and drinks and as we neared the channel were all contentedly sipping aperitifs and nibbling on little tit bits. Soon it would be time to prepare for docking and I asked the First Mate to get fenders and lines ready. Staying in mid-channel we motored past the well-known River Yacht Club and went under the bascule lift-bridge.

The club, established in 1888, is one of the oldest in this part of the United States. The focal point for many top social events, it is much sought after for important private functions. Originally a summer resort club, it was not until after the second world war that Riverside Yacht Club became an 'all-year-round club'.

Next we passed under the high bridge of the motorway and slowly motored up to the Mianus River Marina. The tide was out and the wharf fairly high above

the sea level. It looked to me like just about the right height to step from the flying bridge directly ashore. After the several brandies I had consumed I was not too worried and pretty sure that if necessary I could probably fly ashore.

Our speed was dead slow and with the tide against us, and the rudder hard to starboard, we were slowly pushed alongside. I was now properly dressed in all my yachting finery. White slacks, white shirt, blue blazer and tie, cap at the appropriate angle and shod in the ubiquitous *Docksiders*. As we were about one meter away from the wharf, or what I thought was one meter, I took one step to shore, but there was no shore where I put my foot.

I saw the side of the wharf move rapidly upwards and the next moment hit the water. A second later I popped up. In one hand I clutched one shoe and called: "I'm fine. Don't worry, just stop the engines."

First Mate followed orders and a moment later I crawled over the stern into the cockpit. Dripping wet, my first thought was for the missing shoe and my cap floating merrily away. I restarted the motors and chased after them.

Cecilia and Joe, having gotten over their first shock were now howling with laughter, joined by the First Mate, and since I, seeing only the funny side of my dunking, joined in and we all roared with mirth. Completely sobered I made our second approach to the wharf and only after *Boomerang* was hard up against the breastwork did I step ashore to fasten the lines and put out the springs.

Obviously I could not go to the restaurant in wet clothes and although I searched around for some halfway-civilized attire, I was forced to put on the trousers I had ripped when I slid down the ladder.

Fifteen minutes later, dried and freshly dressed, with a large safety pin saving the day, I was ready and we all went ashore. I locked up the boat and followed the three, who were still chuckling at my antics, to the waiting car that took us to the restaurant.

Later, before we returned to the Mianus Marina, we bade the Yulos good night and waved them good-bye as they were driven back to New York. The tide was now half in and with the range over two meters *Boomerang* had risen to the level of the wharf and we stepped carefully aboard and soon cast off. Fortunately it was an uneventful return to Mamaroneck in the warm and pleasant evening.

My parents invited Jose and Cecilia Yulo to join them at Bad Gastein in Austria, to take the curative waters and enjoy the hot baths of the spa. They then flew to Paris during the late summer to take part in the horse racing season. To everybody's shock Cecilia died suddenly of a heart attack and Jose Yulo had her body flown back to Manila in a chartered DC7 of the Philippine Air Line.

About a year later we learned with sincere pleasure that Don Jose Yulo and Massay Lopez were married in a quiet ceremony and so could give each other many more years of happiness rather than live out their lives in solitary sorrow.

## **NEW ZEALAND 1963**

In November 1962 Diana took our two children with her on a visit to her mother in Sydney. Her father had died in late 1955 and it was an excellent idea for us all to be with Diana's family for Christmas. On 22 December I flew to Sydney and on to Melbourne to join them. I took the helicopter shuttle to the Yarra heliport and then a taxi to Diana's mother's home. We enjoyed a lovely Christmas.

Before leaving New York a young economist in our White Plains office had said that New Zealand was a sensible place to establish a nylon factory. Henry, knowing that I was going to Australia for Christmas said, "that is your territory Ralph. You can go there from Australia." The feeling was that New Zealand was geographically close to Australia. Just across the sea was a distance of 2264 kilometers and rather further than many people imagined. I arrived in Wellington from Sydney on Sunday, the sixth of January 1963 on a Tasman Empire Air Line's Electra II. This was my first of very many future trans-Tasman flights. With the wind behind us the journey took five hours, the same as my return flight, four days later, against a strong head wind.

As I stepped off the plane, Duff Daysh, Frank Renouf and Jack Radford, the three partners of Daysh Renouf and Company, received me. They were sharebrokers in Wellington and the newly appointed New Zealand agents for the Von Kohorn organization. Frank, who proudly drove an old black Rolls Royce limousine, explained that he had just acquired the car from the recently retired New Zealand Governor General, Viscount Charles Cobham. I was taken to the Waterloo Hotel, a fairly new establishment, and assigned a room on the top floor, clean, but pathetically sparse. The Waterloo was the local five-star equivalent, but would not have rated two stars in Europe or the USA.

My negotiations in New Zealand, to make an investment that would give us virtual control of the industry, would require governmental approval. In the past, the government had insisted on maintaining at least sixty percent local ownership and that was the percentage that we ultimately agreed. The requirement was for a total capital of one million pounds in New Zealand currency then worth about two million US dollars.

Duff, Frank and Jack made it clear that they would find no difficulties in placing that amount of shares with the public, but even that required the sanction of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. Alas, the Minister was away on summer holidays, as was the Prime Minister, who was on his farm near Taupo. This was vacation time in New Zealand and all government departments were closed until early February. My brother Henry and his wife had visited Wellington briefly the previous year and met with the principals of Daysh Renouf and Company. Frank, who was a Cambridge 'blue' in tennis, and my brother had established an immediate tennis affinity and were not averse to some business cooperation.

I concluded my preliminary negotiations with Daysh Renouf and Company receiving assurances that Frank would accept chairmanship of our newly to be formed company and Jack one of the directorships. In the absence of the government officials, there was little else to do but leave and return when New Zealand was back in business. Meanwhile in New York, Henry had conducted negotiations to sell our company to Universal American Corporation. Our accountants had been concerned that Henry and I should put in place arrangements to properly ensure that our investment in Von Kohorn International Corporation would not be affected by the death of either of us. A restructuring of the shares had already taken place so that Henry and I were effectively the sole shareholders. Later in the year those shares were swapped for shares in Universal American Corporation.

I left Wellington on 10 January for Sydney, then on the 13th to Djakarta. On the 17th I went to Manila, 23rd to Hong Kong, 26th to Taipei, then reversed the flights and was back in New Zealand on February 3rd. Daysh Renouf had suggested that I fly into Auckland and then drive with Frank and Jack to Wellington, to see some of the country.

Again my timing was impeccable. This time Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was visiting New Zealand. All government departments were shut down in celebration. The hotels were overcrowded with her loyal subjects rushing to Auckland to be present when the Royal Yacht *BRITANNIA* arrived. I was one of the lucky ones and given a spot to stand at the Harbor Board wharf, not too far from the gangway to watch and applaud The Queen and Prince Philip disembarking from their ship. We spent the night in Auckland and the following morning drove south in Frank's 'Rolls'. True to his word, Frank showed me some of the country. We passed through Hamilton and stopped at Lake Karapiro to admire the new power plant. We visited Rotorua on the way and spent the night at the famous tourist hotel in Wairakei, swam in the thermal pool and looked at the steaming boreholes. When driving through Taupo we saw The Queen's Rolls Royce, which had been in a car smash and waited to be repaired. We arrived that evening in Wellington, where I was again put up at The Waterloo in the same room with the same stark surroundings. The town was ready to receive The Queen, with flags and decorations making the streets and buildings indeed colorful.

I arranged to rent the small apartment on the top floor of the Waterloo. The only drawback was the requirement that I had to vacate the rooms for one night each month. That was to enable me to comply with the law and not be regarded as a squatter. I was anxious to find a local yacht club and was turned over to Peter Reed, one of the Daysh Renouf partners with yachting interests. He invited me to accompany him the following Sunday morning, February tenth, to the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club of which he was a member. The Club was looking for members at that time and I was readily signed up the same day. We later drove around the eastern bays and also visited the Worser Bay Yacht Club and Evans Bay Yacht and Motor Boat Club, returning in time to meet a number of Port Nicholson's members.

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One of the very active Club members of Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club was Maurice Crisp, the owner of the yacht *Corsair*. He invited me several times to crew for him and reaffirmed my thinking that sailing was for the birds. I remained a powerboat aficionado.

On the business front, things moved very quickly. We appointed Guy Smith of Mazengarb's as our lawyer who formed our new company, Von Kohorn of New Zealand Limited. We set up corporate offices in an old building in Woodward Street using the facilities of John Stacey who was appointed company secretary. The board consisted of Frank Renouf, chairman, Jack Radford, Chad Smith, Selwyn Robinson of B. J. Ball, who would represent the New Zealand shareholders. Guy Smith, my brother Henry and myself would represent the Von Kohorn interests. I would also run the local operation as managing director.

At the end of February Diana telephoned and advised that on 28 February she and her Mother, Lady Alma Storey, were leaving Sydney on a cruise. The ship would be calling at Auckland on the way to Tahiti. I drove to Auckland to meet the boat. There was an unusual atmosphere but we had dinner together.

Back in Wellington the shares in Von Kohorn New Zealand were offered to the public and the company was successfully floated. I visited many areas within driving distance of Wellington to find a factory site that would allow us to have the necessary large labor force, unlimited amount of water for the chemical processes and a stream where we could dispose of our effluent. I finally settled on Shannon, near Levin, with a substantial labor supply, the nearby Manawatu River, excellent road and close by rail. The land was inexpensive to buy and we would be able to lease any portion, not immediately required, back to the original owner to use for grazing. A high levee protected the factory land from the Manawatu river flood overflow area and there was ample water available from underground sources for processes, cooling, steam production and fire protection.

Next we had to find contractors to build the factory. Drawings were soon on their way from the United States and we were able to commence rather long and painstaking negotiations until we appointed the Fletcher organization, one of New Zealand's leading builders, as our main contractors. The contract was let and constructed started by the middle of the year. During this time I learned of the 'Old Boys Network'. In a small country like New Zealand everyone knows each other. Our lawyer's mother was the sister of the chairman of the Fletcher organization. Our company secretary was also the secretary of Daysh Renouf and Company, our share brokers. Chad Smith was managing director of one of Wellington's leading department stores. A C Hatrick, one of our directors, was a major importer and manufacturer of chemicals.

On 4 June 1963 I flew back to New York. It seemed clear that New Zealand would be my home for at least a year and this was an opportunity to visit Henry, our parents and the company's office. There would have been a number of items that I would have checked concerning the factory at Shannon. At that

time my parents were living at Hotel Adams on Manhattan Island. My father died on 30 June at the age of eighty-one. The following day, while walking in Times Square, a man tapped me on my shoulder and asked whether I was Ralph von Kohorn. I nodded my assent and he handed me an envelope. The contents were the legal documents stating that Diana would arrange a divorce. While I had been in New Zealand, Diana and Alma had flown to the United States, and spent most of May at Bishopstowe. Just before I arrived they had moved to the Plaza Hotel. I was astonished at Diana's action as we had never argued or fought during our marriage. I no doubt was very angry and tried unsuccessfully to talk with Diana. That evening I suffered a breakdown and the next morning was found unconscious on the floor of my bedroom. The staff at my house arranged an ambulance and I spent the 2nd July and night in hospital. My father's funeral was held the same day and despite Diana's actions, I am grateful that she attended. I was too ill to be present.

In July Diana and Alma moved to Nevada and spent five weeks there to establish legal residence to obtain a divorce under that state's laws. I was forced to take the situation as a *fait accomplie*.

On 11 July I returned to Wellington and was back in New York in November to arrange sale of Bishopstowe, Boomerang and other property. As Henry had sold our ownership in VON KOHORN INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION, I purchased through the New Zealand Stock Exchange a total of 350,000 of the 4,000,000 issued shares in Enzlon. They were registered in the names of my children. My family was the largest single shareholder after Universal American Corporation.

When I returned to Wellington I again checked into the Waterloo Hotel. There were no serviced apartments in Wellington at that time and I sought help from my share brokers. Duff Daysh came to the rescue. He was a member of the Wellington Club and able to arrange for me to move as a long-stay guest into the Club's three room annex to the rear of the club building. My fellow annex residents were two judges, one High Court and one Land Court Judge. Early risers, their dawn choruses of heavy smoker's coughs were not easy to become used to, but we usually met at the breakfast table and jointly read the morning paper. I desperately looked for more benign lodgings.

I learned that the Manager of the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club had terminated his employment and that his live-in four-room apartment in the Club was empty. By that time I had been elected honorary secretary to the Rear Commodore Stan Moore. I thought the Club could do with a little added income and offered to rent the unfurnished flat at the same rent I had previously paid to the Wellington Club. My offer was accepted with pleasure and several of the Port Nicholson club members arranged to furnish "my pad".

It was a happy stay. I learned to keep several flagons of beer in the fridge to handle the then existing "six o'clock closing" drinking law. Club Members either maintained small "liquor lockers" or vacated the Club's bar punctually at six to reassemble across the street in the "licensed" Clyde Quay Hotel to continue the



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daily evening swill.

Once I occupied the flat, I enjoyed asking my newly found friends to partake after hours of the beer freely stored in my fridge. I also learned Kiwi drinking habits. Being a non-beer drinker (I went in for whisky) I had the flagons filled and stored in the fridge. I thought that as long as the beer was cold it was ready for drinking. My pals expected and demanded “fresh” beer. I was soon “put straight” and six flagons of my iced beer went down the drain. I only did that once!

After several weeks, a new manager with a family was employed and I had to find other lodgings. I was offered a small apartment at the Avon Flats on the Terrace. After buying the minimum furniture required I moved in and found an elderly motherly type housekeeper to look after me.

I made several new friends in the building and enjoyed the company of Dr. Milne J. Ongley known as Bub and John Taylor. Both eventually wound up in the USA, Ongley dealing in medicine in California and John, formerly head of Revlon, in Honolulu. There developed a close knit little community of New Zealand ex-pats, in Hawaii, headed by Tony Shelley who had built one of the largest Wellington car dealerships.

After July I had suddenly become a newly baked bachelor, and had to acclimatize myself to again “being with female companions.” Being always immaculately dressed and driving the latest model American car was not exactly a hindrance in establishing contacts with young New Zealand lassies. One of the first girls I met was Linley Holyoake, who lived on Pipitea Street. She was the middle one of three sisters.

Linley and I went out a lot, drove around the neighborhood of Wellington and I got to know quite a few other young people. In return Linley often took me along to miscellaneous functions and performances, using free tickets she had been given. One humorous episode that I shall always remember was when I went to collect Linley from her red brick family residence at 41 Pipitea Street. I was waiting in the unlit living room as Linley had run upstairs to quickly change. Her father came into the house and went directly to the dining room. He must have seen my car parked on the street and in his well-known stentorian voice called out to me,

"Don't come in. I have my shoes off, my teeth out and don't want to see anybody."

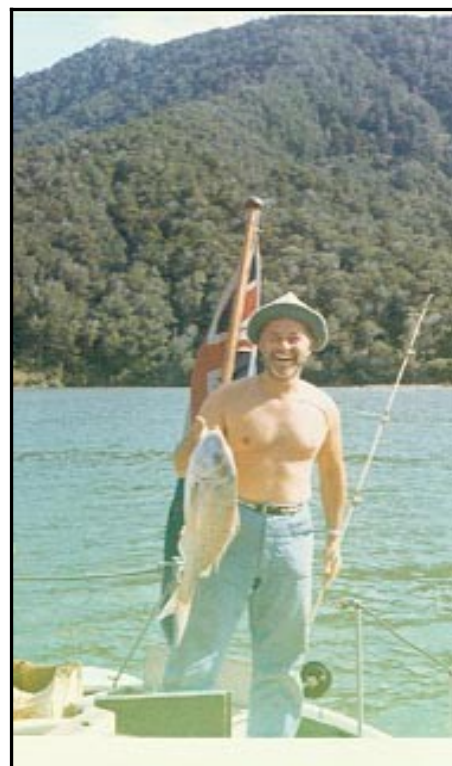
In any family this would have been funny but Linley's father was the Prime Minister. He had made the short walk

home from Parliament to have a quick bite of dinner. Those were the days before security protection and there were no police or guards in front of the prime ministerial residence.

On December tenth I had invited Bill for a pre-Christmas drink and dinner at the White Heron, a restaurant near the local airport. Sitting in a booth, Bill suddenly recognized his brother's voice from a booth directly behind us. Naturally Bill introduced his brother Norman and his date to me and I asked them to swap seats and join my table for a drink. Norman's date was a very elegantly dressed young lady employed at Prestige Hosiery Company as fashion coordinator. Norman Jr. was the younger son of Norman Aldridge, a director of Levin Dye Works and of the Prestige Company. Norman Jr. and had been employed as a training volunteer.

After drinks and a lengthy talk we all said goodbye and I was determined to meet Jill again. The next day I asked my assistant Bill to telephone Jill and to ask her for a dinner date the following day, made up of Bill, his girl friend Susie, Jill and myself.

I was fortunate in having met one of the past commodores of the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club, Bill Edmundson, the managing director of the New Zealand Industrial Gases Company. He had built his own all steel twin screw cruiser *Miranda* and had taken her for the maiden voyage across the Tasman Sea to Sydney. With a well-trying crew he was dying to get away for the Christmas Holydays. There was one place open for a guest and I was indeed lucky to be accepted as a dog's body on a cruise across the sea to Nelson and points north. I remember particularly our arrival in Nelson on the town wharf on Sunday and silly me, getting dressed up in my best blazer and walking from the port to the Nelson Cathedral for Christmas services. The cruise was uneventful, perfectly planned and equally well executed. 'Dusty' Miller and his wife handled all financial matters. Radio communication was



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carried out by Herbie Dixon an ex prisoner of war in Japan. Also aboard were Derek Bale, Barbara Crawford, and John O'Shea (later to become a famous film director) as cabin boy. That made a wonderful harmonious group and once the anchor was down and the ship secure there was much singing and games around the large dining room table. After my return to Wellington I had enough time to prepare myself for the planned visits to potential clients and customers starting on 27<sup>th</sup> January.



I had asked Bill to phone Jill and make a date for a foursome. Once she had agreed I promptly cancelled Bill and his date. I drove up to Jill's lodgings in my white Chrysler Imperial that had been my car in New York. It was a very large, flamboyant car with turquoise leather upholstery and I hoped it would make a suitable impression. The Chrysler was a lot wider than most cars in New

Zealand and being left hand drive it was often frightening for passengers especially in the narrow city streets. In New Zealand the car was very distinctive and somewhat impractical as the parking areas were small in comparison.

Jill and I went to dinner at Orsini's that had proverbially fancy 'silver dinner service'. There were flowers on the table, champagne in the wine cooler and the dinner was perfect, even though Jill refused to drink. It took me years to wean her away from abstinence.

After this dinner I only dated Jill, forsook all others, and really gave the Wellingtonian society something to talk about. How terrible! An innocent young New Zealand girl gadding about town, for years on end, with a divorced older American man.

## VON KOHORN NYLON of NEW ZEALAND LTD

Norman Aldridge was the brother-in-law of our Director Archie Hatrick. Norman was the owner and managing director of Levin Dye Works Limited, nylon yarn knitters, weavers and dyers of Levin. His son, Bill Aldridge, had a background in advertising and public relations and he was the greatest contact man any newcomer to New Zealand could hope for. I was delighted to be able to employ him as my assistant in October 1963. At much the same time Henry G Bosevic arrived from New York to take the role of Plant Manager.

Duff Daysh had recommended that I meet with a potential client, Lane Walker Rudkin and Company in Christchurch. In 1963 the easiest way to visit that city,

was to use one of the two overnight ferries, plying between Wellington and Lyttleton Harbor. The *MAORI* and the *HINEMOA* left every day early in the evening and arrived the following morning. They passed each other halfway down the coast during the night and passengers often stayed on the well-lit decks to wave to the other ship. On February eleventh I left at eight in the evening and arrived at seven in the morning in Lyttleton. I met with Noel Rudkin to discuss his company's possible requirements of nylon yarn and returned by plane a few days later.

Our work was growing and so was the staff. Chad Smith, who had an office in Commerce House on Wakefield Street, negotiated for us a very advantageous lease on the fourth floor. In May 1964 we moved from Woodward Street and commenced our Wellington operations until the factory's office in Shannon was ready ten months later. Many times I drove the 70 miles from Wellington to Shannon, checking on building progress, talking to suppliers, transport specialists, head hunters, government departments and shareholders.

With Bill Aldridge, I commenced a round of visits from the top of the North Island to the bottom of the South Island to meet with all potential users of nylon in the country. Bill had pre-arranged meetings with all nylon users. Upon my request the secretary at Enzlon had surveyed suitable cars and recommended a three-litre Rover that proved very convenient. It was rather smaller than the Chrysler Imperial that I had used in New York and was eventually shipped to Wellington. I soon found that the Chrysler was not that practical for New Zealand roads and parking places.

We drove from the north to the south and introduced ourselves to the manufacturers of stockings, underwear, fabrics, ropes and bristles. The number of companies was not large, but they were spread all over the country and for me, a newcomer to New Zealand, it gave me the opportunity to get to know most highways and byways of both islands.

When the factory in Shannon was established I found it convenient to also maintain a bank account with a local establishment. Since my main bank was with the ANZ in Wellington I presented myself to Spencer Fry the manager of the ANZ's Levin branch.

Spence Fry and his wife Nancy were a very friendly couple and invited Jill and I to use their 'batch' at Papamoa, and spend a few days at the coast. We drove up in my Rover car and found their beach house to be a very well furnished home. We only needed to buy food. Papamoa did not have any shops and there were very few buildings. Thus we drove to Tauranga to get supplies and then back to the beach house. We could hardly wait to get into our bathing togs, and run across the sand into the sea.



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Brought up in the USA I could hardly believe that one could have a home at a beach, only protected by a simple lock at the door. That one could hand over a



house to a client, who was still a comparative stranger, with complete trust and apparently no worries was also unusual. But that was New Zealand. People were more honest and had complete trust in fellow beings.

During the construction of the building M Cail of Universal American Corporation visited New Zealand and I took him to Shannon to inspect progress. The local photographer captured

our presences. The building was completed on time and the plant ready for use in March 1965. The machinery all came from the USA in 1964. It was shipped to Wellington, New Zealand and Lyons Transport took the items to Shannon. At that stage I was advised that only one boiler had been delivered rather than the two that the contract specified. I was most upset at this and had considerable discussions with Universal American, the new owners of Von Kohorn International. They advised that only one boiler was required to satisfy the conditions of the "turn key" contract. I did not share that opinion.

As a result of our disagreement Hayden B Eaves was sent out from California, with his wife Shirley, to take over my role of Managing Director. The first action he took was to change the name from Von Kohorn Nylon Corporation to Enzlon Corporation. The local Board of Enzlon provided Hayden with a home in Khandallah and magnificent office in Shannon plus a Chinese female private secretary.

Hayden entered into a two year supply contract with Allied Chemicals, USA, for supply of the nylon raw material, a bagged white powder. Not being a chemist he had ordered Nylon polymer six six from the USA. All of the machinery had been



designed to use Nylon polymer six from Germany. When the melt process was started the nylon solidified and all of the piping had to be removed and cleaned.

In April 1966 I thought it was again time for me to visit the Von Kohorn organizations in Taipei. It had since developed into a very profitable factory at Towfen and I was anxious to again meet up with its president, General Lin and our Dutch manager engineer van der Weghe. From Taipei I went to White Plains in New York to try to remedy the problems with the New Zealand machinery and the nylon powder. I was unable to make any progress. During that time Hayden flew to Hong Kong with his secretary ostensibly to act as interpreter for discussions with business contacts. At that time all of the business in Hong Kong, then a colony of England, was conducted in English. Shirley was not amused at her husband's action. The chairman of Enzlon, Frank Renouf, seethed with rage over this incident. He met Hayden at the Wellington Airport on his return and fired him with instructions to pack his things at Khandallah and not to set foot at Shannon.

My return to New Zealand was planned by the normal route via Los Angeles, Honolulu, Nadi and Auckland. Flights were not frequent across the Pacific Ocean, the trip was planned to take several days and would get me to Wellington by Tuesday 2 May. At Honolulu I received a phone call from Ron Jarden advising that because of the problems with production the Enzlon share price had collapsed. I had been blamed for the collapse and the chairman, Frank Renouf, had called a meeting of directors for the 1 May. It was believed that I would not be able to get to the meeting. I managed to arrange earlier flights via Pango Pango, Apia, Nadi and Auckland, arriving in Wellington on Sunday 30 April 1966.

The meeting was one of bitter recriminations. The result was that Frank contacted Stanley Korman of Holeproof who brought out experts and attempted to start the factory. I knew that this action would fail and as I predicted once more the pipes were clogged. At that stage Frank decided to close the factory and sold the building and contents to Holeproof and Enzlon was liquidated. Holeproof obtained the correct polymer and successfully produced nylon filament with the Von Kohorn machinery.

During this time I came in contact with various people in Levin, center of Horowhenua, and a growing textile town. I had become familiar with Levin Dye Works through the Aldridge family and a lawyer, John Kember, and met another local industrialist Kurt Hager. Kurt, formerly from Austria, was married to a local girl. After working for L R Wisharts, shirt maker, he had decided to establish his own shirt and blouse-making factory. Kurt Hager Company was formed and I was invited to invest and become a director. I agreed subject to Ron Jarden also taking a directorship. Ron and I remained Directors for about four years. The company operated successfully until the death of Kurt a few years later.

Kurt was a comparatively young man and left his wife Barbara with a son called Nicky and daughter. Nicky became notorious as the author of the books



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entitled *Seeds of Distrust, Secrets and Lies* and *The Hollow Men* all attacking and questioning New Zealand Government decisions.

## INVESTMENTS

I lived at 217 The Terrace, an apartment building, occupied by many young people. Traveling frequently I maintained a vaccination booklet, which allowed me to prove to the authorities that I could freely enter countries with medical restrictions. Keeping the vaccinations up to date was important and once my vaccination booklet showed expired dates it was essential to find a doctor who could give me the many “shots” covering typhus, typhoid, and all other diseases the authorities deemed contagious.

There was a young doctor who also maintained an apartment at “217” the Avon Flats, and he very kindly brought the necessary vaccinations to his home, invited me for drinks, gave me the shots and signed my vaccination certificate. We became quite friendly and often I would call at Bub’s surgery and we would go out together to have dinner. His surgery was in the old Empire Hotel building and many times I would wait while Bub treated complete teams of rugby players who came in with complaints of back and spinal injuries. At this time Bub gave me the nickname of Quicksilver because I was always happy to instantly agree to any of his suggested crazy activities.

He had developed a non-evasive procedure injecting his *Ongley Fluid* around the injured spinal discs and knee joints. His method was considered a miracle cure and athletes swore by his magical procedure.

I still had close connections to my former office in Osaka and Bub found it convenient to have them find a pharmaceutical organization to produce for him the *Ongley Fluid* in Japan and ship the medication by air to Wellington. This operation continued to be very successful.

Bub was also an avid hunter of wild boar and on one of my trips to the USA he asked me to purchase for him a very expensive hunting rifle with beautifully engraved decorations. I had no trouble first ordering, then buying and shipping the weapon to Wellington. One of his nurses was given the task to secure the gun from customs, register it with the police authorities and unpack it from the heavily protected greasy shipping container. The rifle was exactly what Bub had ordered and became one of his favorite “toys.”

I had been invited by Bub to go boar shooting with him. We drove to Whiteman’s valley. Another invited friend had a “pig dog” and we traipsed through bush and paddocks. To my great surprise the dog actually found a poor defenseless animal, which was promptly shot. Fortunately Bub knew how to cut up the beast and the three of us each took home a piece of the boar to be made into a future meal. Not having aged the meat it turned out to be tough and I thought very smelly.

Another more successful trip with Bub was to Taupo accompanied by Mazengarb, a young lawyer, and one of Bub's nurses. Bub had been married before and had a little son Glenn, who lived mostly with his mother who had a medical problem.

One day I was approached by Bub to assist in a new venture. He had heard of large mineral deposits containing gold ore near Westport on the South Island. He also knew of my involvement in my family's development of a sulphur mine in Ecuador and thought that I could be helpful in the establishment of a gold mining in New Zealand.

I commenced by forming a company calling it *Marlborough Mineral Mining Company*. There were to be four unpaid directors with Bub as Chairman. He invited Noel Holyoake, brother of the prime minister, to also be a director. Noel had recently commenced operations producing spiral ducting under an American licence. He visualized our substantial use of his products for the operation of sluicing the ore out of the overburden. I was to be the fourth director.

Before operations even commenced we were running into considerable problems with mining rights and the danger of excessive use of water. There was so much water we decided to dissolve the company.

Many years later, after practicing in Australia and Rhodesia, Bub had moved to California and Ensenada in Mexico to continue his amazing non-evasive back pain practice. Having stayed in touch with him over the years, Jill and I were anxious to meet up again. When we had arrived in San Diego in October 1993 for a Blue Gavel Annual Meeting we phoned him and made a date for dinner at a local restaurant. We had arrived early and sat at the bar under a huge lighting fixture representing a wagon wheel with many electric bulbs. Suddenly California shrugged and the chandelier swung slowly from side to side. At that moment Bub and his new wife came into the bar and both Jill and I felt that this was a wonderful omen of a happy "hullo" for our friends. His new wife was a beautiful Chinese lady who had been an Olympic ice skater. We later learned that Bub had established the Ongley Back and Joint Pain Center and is now assisted by his son Glenn who is a California MD. Today, in 2007, Bub is considered the world's leading expert in the field of non-surgical reconstructive therapy.

In the early sixties there were very few restaurants in Wellington. A young Austrian architect named Fritz Eisenhofer, who had just finished designing a restaurant called The Zodiac, approached Ido de Bernardo from Tawa and me. The three of us formed a company each taking one third of the capital. Ido was the chairman, in February 1964 Neville Adams was appointed as manager and Joseph as maître d'. We all agreed that there were to be no "freebees", but that we would frequent the Zodiac as much as possible.

Neville handled his job to perfection and I was always assured of superb service. Jill did not drink alcohol and Joseph always had several bottles of sparkling grape juice in the cooler specially for her. The most popular drink was

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a red Australian wine called *BAKANO*. The restaurant was on the second floor of a corner building on Willis Street, across from The Majestic Building. Unfortunately there never was any space for parking my car.

With the Zodiac humming along nicely, the three of us became interested in the possibility of investing in another restaurant venture. Wright Stevensons, a major pastoral company, decided to build a high rise building on a site that stretched from Lambton Quay to The Terrace. A department store occupied the basement, ground floor and mezzanine with an entrance from Lambton Quay. Above that were several floors of car parks. White marble steps gave access from the Terrace to the lobby for the office tower and we leased the area on the Lambton Quay side of the lobby.

Believing in sun and wide spaces, in particular after the dark narrow interior of The Zodiac, we had the side of the new restaurant facing Lambton Quay covered in plate glass windows. To give it a more upmarket flavor we selected the name *INTERNATIONAL RESTAURANT*. The furnishings were modern featuring chrome and glass. After the tenants from the floors above us had gotten tired of the new restaurant, and the surrounding business houses had lost interest, the restaurant proved to be a disaster. No advertising helped and we were bleeding red ink. Our landlords suggested that the décor was the reason. A radical change was required and we engaged a restaurateur Bob Sell who had successfully revived three Auckland establishments and owned one on Willis Street in Wellington.

He came, he saw, and he ripped the International apart and renamed it The Beefeater. His experience had taught him that customers did NOT want light and chrome furnishings. Light made drinking guests uncomfortable, they wanted deep plushy, soft seats with dark corners so that the countenance of the drinkers did not reflect any possible excess.

Out came the plate glass windows and the open plan chrome furnishings. Artisans installed fake wooden beams on the ceiling, squishy black leather seats in corners and a center bar with high stools. The aim was to look like an English pub. Again the customers stayed away in droves. Wrightsons were good enough to let us go. The last I saw of the restaurant was a barber and men's hairdressing establishment in our former occupied space. The only successful facet of the ownership of the restaurant had been the car parking. Given the size of my vehicles, that was important.

Then there were other ventures. I had a good friend, Henry Newrick, who called me one day. He had founded a business newspaper called *National Business Review*. He offered me some of his shares, together with Reg. Birchfield and Ian Grant. I usually tried to hold a controlling interest in any undertaking in which I invested funds. My investment vehicle was Genrock Holdings Ltd and I was fortunate to have two good friends as my directors Ron Jarden and a young lawyer, Richard Heron. Thus it came about that I wound up with Fifty One per cent of the NBR shares.

One night, about eleven, I had a call from Ron who started his conversation with:

“You have just sold your controlling shares in NBR to Hugh Rennie,” (a well-known Wellington business lawyer).

I was totally unaware that a newly passed law directed against the illustrious Lord Thompson of Fleet prohibited foreign ownership of a publishing enterprise. Ron quickly brought me up to date and fortunately nothing further developed in this quiet little saga about my foreign (American) control of a New Zealand newspaper.

I had been responsible for originally naming the enterprise Fourth Estate Publishing Company. I had followed the American precept that the “Fourth Estate” in the foundation of the USA was the Press. Reg was the managing director of our paper. Ian ran the office and Lo, a Chinese, took charge of advertising.

In hindsight I came to the conclusion that I was better off not owning shares in a newspaper.

Being a newcomer to Kiwiland I heard a lot about the great heritage and the war exploits of the Aussies and Kiwis. I was told much about the annual parade of the veterans when, early in the morning, they dressed in their former uniforms and wore their medals. I had been invited to participate in the 1969 march.

I had discarded my uniform long ago, at the end of the war, but fortunately kept my very sparse personal war ribbons and decorations. Being a commander of the Australian Coast Guard, I had a lovely uniform, but hardly ever put on, because of lack of occasions. Here now was an opportunity to kill two birds with one stone. I would wear my Aussie naval uniform decorated with my US Army medals’ ribbons and decorations.

When the day came I presented myself, as suggested, punctually at 5:45 am at the cenotaph in Wellington at the north end of Lambton Quay. To my surprise and pleasure the motley bunch of uniformed men and women were marched to the Wellington main railway station where a table was set up. Each participant was given a glass of noticeably watered down rum. At that point one of the veterans in a sergeants uniform called everybody to order and slowly arranged us into rows of four. Once having established a semblance of order we all marched to the tune of a bagpipe along Lambton Quay back to the Cenotaph. There was a solemn ceremony ending with a lonely trumpeter blowing the ubiquitous “last post” and after coming to attention we were all dismissed.

My host was the head of a company called *Lyte Aluminium*, who lived in the Hutt. His neighbor was the well-known radio personality, Selwyn Toogood, made famous because of his game show ‘*It’s in the Bag.*’ Selwyn very kindly invited my host and I to lunch at his home and I learned about Wellington radio and other artists.

Another television personality, who became a good friend, was Peter and his wife Sally Read. Peter hosted a weekly program called ‘*Night Sky*’ and also

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wrote a newspaper column of the same name. They often came to join us for a meal and we visited them at their home on Miro Street near the airport.

While many people were happy to meet a new American investor. I in turn was happy to get to know a lot of the local Kiwis and to establish new friendships and casual acquaintances.

Another New Zealand businessman who eventually became a leading investor and financier was our friend Robert Jones. He was knighted by the Queen and now spends much of his time in Sydney. Sir Robert, a former outstanding student at Victoria University and an amateur boxer had the uncanny ability to select and invest in successfully developing properties. Many members of the public both in New Zealand sought after his investment companies' shares and Australia and he hardly ever disappointed his shareholders.

In the 1980's we were invited to Bob's new house in Lower Hutt. I thought it one of the finest residences in Wellington, including even the foreign country embassies in the capital. It was located on a bluff overlooking the land below. An almost one kilometer long drive led from the street to the main building through flowerbeds and plantings. Once through the entrance door of the home we walked directly into the enormous living room. The entire wall facing us was made of glass, curved, without showing any joints. It was seven pm, dark and the outlook towards Wellington in the south and to the distant homes in the North glowed and can only be described as magical. At one side of the living room was Bob's library, lined with first editions and beautifully bound books.

In the early 1970's my personal investments were in the collapsing Renouf companies and I quickly switched my holdings to come under the umbrella of the R. A. Jarden financial organization. During the boom in the Australian mining market most investments proved to be almost endlessly successful. And Jarden "did me well indeed". In hindsight I should have stayed with the share market.

In the early 1970's Ron Jarden came to me with a new proposition. He had acquired a farm lease at Ruakakapatuna near Orongorongo. He proposed to stock it with sheep and suggested that I would stock it with black Aberdeen Angus cattle. The cattle would feed on the long grass and the sheep would then nibble the rest. Thus we would be able to have two producing animals on the same land area.

I knew about as much of raising cattle as I did about going to the moon. I did know, however that I could trust Ron with anything he proposed. I approved his plan without any discussion and agreed to finance the immediate purchase of the cattle and the employment of a custodian to run our joint farm. After a few weeks Ron invited Jill and me to visit our farm. I had the pleasure of photographing large numbers of animals roaming across the hills (and hopefully growing fat on the luscious grass of our farm).

Time passed and it became November; the time when one thinks of approaching Christmas and hot summer vacations. Ron called me with

devastating news. There had been a sudden, totally unexpected snowfall and cold spell that had killed all my beasts. The caretaker had cut trenches and simply dumped the carcasses and covered them over with soil.



Instead of receiving the good news of our first sales, I received the terrible news of a demand from my bank to cover the amount borrowed for the purchase of the beasts. Luckily a recent increase in my share holdings in Australia covered the borrowed amount. I was therefore able to simply write off the catastrophic loss. On the other hand I had to laugh off the hoped for profit from a farming venture.

There were always things going on that were part of my life. In early March 1968 Frank Renouf advised me that his hotel in Auckland would finally be opened on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March and the Prime Minister Keith Holyoake would officiate. I was invited to attend with several well-known personalities. What was not generally known at that time was that because of monetary restrictions the ceiling height of the floors had been reduced to an architectural minimum. This change in ceiling heights would later prevent the installation of air conditioning ducting. What was to become the highly advertised Auckland Intercontinental, a hotel of world status, turned into a sweatbox of rooms during the Auckland summer. The month of March was pleasantly cool and the opening a tremendous success. Sir James Fletcher, CEO of the Fletcher Group of Companies, the builders of the Intercontinental was in attendance together with representatives of the PANAM Corporation, major shareholders of the Intercontinental Hotel chain.



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I always loved to get to know my Kiwi friends better and give them the opportunity to learn more about me. Keith Holyoake I knew from my friendship with Linley, Sir James was the builder of my factory at Shannon and Frank Renouf had been the chairman of the Von Kohorn Nylon Corporation. I thus felt much at home with the celebrants. Regretfully, for the sake of our comfort I later preferred the South Pacific's fully air-conditioned seventh floor suites, to the Intercontinental's accommodations.

We had been invited to the opening with Robert and Thea Muldoon doing the honours. At that stage Jill and I were already very friendly with Bob, often invited to his home to sample red wine and admire his lilies. Our friendship with Lady Muldoon has continued to this day and we have remained in touch.

## STAMP COLLECTION

I was an avid stamp collector and fortunately had the foresight to decide on a single topic rather than a general world collection. My specialty was Austria, limited to the stamps issued from 1850 to 1939 and to include airmail, revenue and privately issued stamps. I collected and accumulated stamps by trading with other collectors, buying from dealers but mainly by bidding at stamp auctions in the USA and overseas.

The value of many stamps is destroyed when they are either pasted into albums or fastened using 'hinges' to display pages. I was careful to use albums where stamps could be slid into pockets or strips of paper.

In order to study printing abnormalities of stamps between 1850 and 1860 I often purchased stamps of that issue from dealers in glassine envelopes holding usually twenty five or fifty specimens. I would then meticulously study the printing variations, make careful enlarged drawings of the shapes of the numerals and was often able to establish the position of the stamps within the sheets during their printing process. This applied to stamps printed in 1856 from wooden platen that showed tiny variations in each stamp.

It was all a labor of love, but variations fully described and discussed were publicized in specialty stamp magazine. I was well known for my work and president of the Austria Stamp Collectors Club of New York and of the Austria Airmail Stamp Society. During my travels in Europe I placed advertisements in various stamp magazines offering to buy stamp collections. I would then buy the world collections, remove the pages holding the Austrian stamps and immediately sell the remaining collections to stamp dealers. I rarely lost much money on these transactions but gained a mass of stamps for my studies.

At major auctions I bought stamps that rarely came on the market and acquired two specimens of the famous reddish Mercury Newspaper stamps.

I was fortunate that the former Austrian Minister for the Postal Service, Dr. Haiböck was a friend of my father and helped me with securing much of the

archival material dispersed during the war years. I had my collection valued by experts and insured in 1953 for three hundred thousand dollars.

After moving from White Plains to Wellington I shipped the entire collection of thirty-four albums to New Zealand. They were kept in my apartment.

I was told of a general stamp exhibition to be held in 1967 on the occasion of the Tauranga Stamp Club's thirtieth anniversary. I contacted the exhibitors and reserved ten frames. Three days before the exhibit opened I packed up several volumes of my collection and drove up to The Mount, Tauranga's seaside beach, to check in at a motel and review the exhibition area. The exhibit had not been laid out and I chalked the positions of the frames assigned to me on the concrete floor. The frames were of a size with which I was familiar being back to back thus facing two different aisles. As that would split my display I decided to have five frames of my General collection facing one aisle and the other five containing my airmail collection facing another aisle. The following day I helped the exhibitors to set up frames and made sure to select the sturdiest and neatest ones for my displays.

The exhibit in general was a roaring success. My stamps were on black pages as opposed to the normal white pages and must have impressed the judges because I walked away with three Gold, two Silver and one Bronze medal. One of the Gold medals was for my overall display. Later I had all six medals mounted on a stand displayed proudly in my office.

I decided that I would not be in a position to continue my collecting or studies of the Austrian stamps and since they were of great value they should be given to my children. I first started to take the stamps, on their sheets but without the binders, to Sydney to give to Diana. Realizing the danger of the collection being lost I then wrote a very explicit letter to her explaining the danger of disposing of the stamps. There was no dealer in this part of the world who had sufficient specialty knowledge to appraise the value. I suggested that I would be willing to take the collection to one of the top European dealers in Switzerland and arrange for a Specialty Auction of the famous Ralph Von Kohorn Collection for the children's benefit. Unfortunately my advice was not heeded. To this day Diana has no idea of how much money she deprived the children by flogging off the collection to an unscrupulous stamp dealer for a paltry few dollars, and using that money to take a trip to Russia with the children.

## **MODERN PAINTINGS**

My first acquaintance in the artistic field was the young, but already white haired gallery owner, Peter MacLevy. He specialized in dealing with paintings of a New Zealand artist, Colin McCahon, who became the darling of the buying public. Colin was an abstractionist, and had studied in London. His works were

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very sombre, very large and not my cup of tea. Peter introduced me to Selwyn Muru, (more about him later).

Shortly after having established my factory at Shannon, I was approached by a young New Zealander, John Walker, married to Louise, who, I thought, was a remarkable businessman. He was dealing mainly with imports of textile machinery. Since I had many contacts in the American textile machinery industry I was happy to suggest to John new approaches to leading manufacturers in the States. John invited me to become an unpaid director of his company, which suited me since it prevented my possible conflict of interests. I remained a director for four years. Eventually John migrated to the USA and found his niche by joining one of the major American textile companies.

In 1966 I decided to collect New Zealand abstract art. One evening in I met a young Maori painter at a bar and he showed me one of his paintings done on a piece of plywood. I admired it and offered to purchase it for five dollars.

“It’s just a piece of shit,” Selwyn Muru said to me and proceeded to smash it on the half gallon glass bottle he had been drinking from.

I asked him to paint anything he liked on anything he was happy with and I would pay him twenty-five Pounds. The upshot was that we became good friends and he introduced me to a number of Maori artists. Many were happy to accept my commission to paint anything they liked, as long as it was an abstract design. I purchased six paintings by Muru, some directly from him and others through dealers.

In 1964 I had acquired three major works by Don Driver. Other works I acquired were by Patrick Hanly, Ralph Hotere, Michael Illingworth, Colin McCahon, Para Matchitt, Milan Mrkusich, Sutton, Trollope and Gordon Walters, and many others. The photograph shows one of the many I acquired. Called “Impression of an Auckland Coffee shop” it was created by Kathleen McKay.



Having assembled forty artists, all of whom needed more public exposure, I decided on an exhibition calling it *Abstract Paintings by Forty New Zealand Artists*. It was held in the New Zealand Display Center in Sturdee Street on 21 November 1966. The American Ambassador Herbert Powell opened the exhibition. An entrance fee of two shillings and sixpence was collected for the benefit of the Cancer Society of New Zealand.

Once the exhibit was over I was left with forty framed paintings, all, mostly large size works of art that needed a home. Picture rails in my office at 65 The Terrace in Wellington solved part of the problem. The paintings were spectacular if rather crowded, as there was no wall space left to be seen. Naturally I kept on buying paintings and the wall space in my office was not large enough for the display. The remainder of the paintings went in my storage room and some others became welcome presents to friends at special occasions. Several are in our apartments in Wellington and Australia and still give us joy.

The problem with the excess paintings was partially solved by my office manager. While I was overseas he arranged a sale and that dramatically reduced the number.

In 1974 the US Ambassador Armistead Selden got in contact with me. He suggested we hold an auction at the embassy of large photographic color reproductions of paintings done by the famous American Wild West painter Frederic Remington. A large crowd of Wellington art lovers came and the bidding became exciting. I decided to bid for three of the reproductions and finally only Arthur (later Sir) Williams and I were bidding. This being for a

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charity, I topped every bid from my friend. Ultimately he desisted; I had the final bid, took possession of the three paintings and presented them to the Embassy. There they hang to this day.

## STRANDING IN THE HAWKESBURY

On one of my numerous visits to Sydney, Diana finally relented and allowed me to see and 'approach' Karen and Steven. That was supposedly prohibited under a legal mandate that Diana's brother Keith had explained to me. Keith claimed it was "To prevent me from kidnapping the kids to the USA." I always assumed that Keith and my mother-in-law were very much responsible for Diana having suddenly decided to divorce me.

I was of course delighted at the opportunity to be able to talk to the kids and made special preparations. It was to be a 'fun' day for us all and Diana agreed for me to charter a small cruiser from the boat builders and rentals at Church Point provided she could supervise the visit. I got in touch with Halvorsen's' at Bobbin Head, where Doug kept his cruiser and reserved a boat.

Diana with Steven, Karen and myself drove to Church Point. I checked that the cruiser was equipped with adequate fuel, water and crockery. It was lovely day and I hoped to take the boat beyond Coaster's Retreat, which was as far as Doug had usually taken me. On the boat I found a warning advising that cruising on the Hawkesbury required a minimum of two feet of water. Being an experienced boatman I carefully studied the nautical charts with which the boat was provided. The estuary at the bottom of the river is called Broken Bay and the chart showed adequate water to enter the stream. Diana and the children enjoyed every minute of the cruise and it soon was time for the noonday snack they had brought along. I looked for a suitable anchorage and found a mention of the Ku-ring gai area that looked safe.



The kids had little trouble lowering our anchor and I made sure that the other end of the rope was securely fastened in the anchor well. Before long we were swinging on the anchor line. Diana unpacked our lunch and we snacked on sandwiches and soft drinks. The weather was overcast but all was well and time for a rest. The tide table provided gave

information on fishing in the river. The outgoing tide kept the stern of the boat pointing to the mouth of the river. I watched fascinated or hypnotised as the flow of the water seemed to slowly reduce until suddenly there was a distinctive banging on the bottom of our little craft. I shot up from my reverie and rushed to the bow. We were no longer swinging but standing still with the water around us rushing away towards the estuary.

It was time for action stations! I started the motor and then attempted with the boathook to push us off the bottom. I only succeeded in driving the boathook deeper into the sand and finally leaving it there. I turned off the motor. From action stations it was panic stations and then as quickly time to think. Diana had been boating long enough on Boomerang with the kids to leave the worrying to the brilliant skipper.

Once I knew that we were stuck there was little to do. We had a radio tuned to Halvorsen's frequency. I called them to report that I had run aground and to ascertain at what time we could expect to be released by the incoming tide. They did not appear to be worried. Maybe these groundings happened often. Luckily for us we had run aground with the boat remaining perfectly balanced and after a few hours we sat stately with sand all around us watching the evening sky getting darker. Of course Karen and Steven had a whale of a time while Diana and I sat around the cabin table. It was not cold but I now had to worry about how to feed the family.

Where we were stranded, the Hawkesbury River was not very wide and we were hardly fifty meters from shore. We could see houses and what appeared to be a dairy. After a full discussion with the crew we decided that Karen and Steven should climb over board, walk up to the shore and buy sandwiches, eggs, bacon milk and possibly some cake. We would cook a meal on their return and if necessary in the morning breakfast. I gave the children some money; they hopped over the transom and ran across the sand. Diana and I were left alone to worry until we heard them returning, howling with laughter at silly Dad running aground.

For the night there were two cabins. Karen and Steven occupied one, Diana the other and I preferred to stand watch in the wheelhouse. I think the tide started making about three a.m. and I remember fixing eggs when it started to get light. We all were up when the tide began to lift the boat and then we watched anxiously until she started to float and hang from the anchor line. I waited until after seven a.m. to radio Halvorsen's to report that we had successfully survived the night, were again afloat and intended to leave shortly for Church Point. They advised to air the engine room for three minutes before starting the motor. I of course complied.

The boat had no mechanical anchor winch and Steven with Karen and finally also Diana struggled to retrieve the anchor, which had embedded itself deeply in the sand. It is fascinating how on so many boats that the task requiring muscular ability is always left to the weaker sex. Finally our boat was gliding past the Hawkesbury River entrance towards Bobbin Head. Nothing further



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happened and we arrived safely. I paid for an extra day charter plus a lost boat hook and then we drove back to Vaucluse, not wiser but surely older after my interlude on the Hawkesbury River.

On another beautiful morning I took the escalator from the lobby at the Sydney Hilton Hotel down to the street level. I was all dressed up in my nautical gear to meet my brother in law Keith Storey. The kid brother of Diana had invited me to come for a short ride on his cruiser. Keith owned a motor yacht called *Marabu*, which was moored at the outermost jetty of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia.

We cast off and then idled in the fairway while we waited the signal that the lift bridge could be raised to allow *Marabu*, with her multiple array of antennas, to slip under the bridge into Sydney Harbour. To the left we passed a very large storage structure that accommodated several hundred small craft, many with outboards. They could ride up to the entry position where they were lifted by elevator to their assigned slot and hydraulically pushed into their personal holding area. It was a very modern and classy facility.

Diana told me that each year Keith took *Marabu* to the Coral Sea Islands and replenished the emergency provisions kept there for stranded shipwrecked sailors. The trip to the atoll would take *Marabu* quite a distance offshore into deep water. She was well equipped for this work. Keith usually took the little ship to an overnight stop above the coral bottom. All her anchoring gear was extra heavy with stainless steel chain and stainless cabling.

Keith had been divorced and often asked his sister Diana to act as hostess for the trip. She would prepare the food and look after Keith's guests. At night he would lower his specially designed coral anchor, fastened to a very long cable at the end of the long anchor chain. When bottom was reached, he dragged the anchor only lightly into the coral bottom. From previous visits he was used to the uncomfortable rocking motion of the ship. He had installed a novel device called a *flopper stopper*. It consisted of heavy outriggers on both sides of the ship and allowed a contraption to be lowered on steel cables to just below water level. The contraptions were similar to very solid wooden doors with hinges permitting the water pressure when lowered on the way down, to open the 'door'. On the way up, the water automatically forced 'the doors shut and thus prevented the vessel from continuously rolling. They stopped "the flop".

Keith was a lover of gadgets and had the wherewithal to indulge in that habit. *Marabu* of course had radio communication. Rather than having to switch from one frequency to another, Keith had individual radios for each of the most used frequencies. Each frequency was also equipped with its most appropriate aerial. It meant a lot of equipment, but was oh so very convenient. Another convenience I much admired was a simple small hatch installed above the worktable in the galley. Rubbish and food scraps were simply pushed through the little hatch and dropped conveniently directly overboard. In those days people rarely thought of the impact to the environment.

Keith was a young man of short stature. After having worked for his father at Overseas Corporation in Sydney, he became manager of Overseas

Corporation's office first at Singapore and later at their London office. Active in yachting he had a very unusual and unhappily much publicized occurrence. His yacht had been selected to represent the Australian dragon sailing class at the Fourteenth Olympics. While loading the vessel at the Sydney wharf for shipment to London, a part of the crane broke, fell on the yacht and crushed it. It also unfortunately eliminated Keith from participating in the Olympic Dragon Class sailing competition.

## ACADEMY OF ELEGANCE

When Jill lived in Auckland she had gone to a finishing school, which was owned by Peggie Wilson. She enjoyed the lessons and in 1964 thought that such a school would be of great benefit to many young Wellington girls. She negotiated an agreement with Peggie for the use of the Auckland school's name, which was called The Academy of Elegance. I recommended she should talk to a lawyer and incorporate a limited liability company. I also suggested that she employ an accountant, Vincent Paino, to set up books and carry out all activities to comply with the legal requirements.

As a location for her school Jill found space on the second floor at fifteen Manner's Street, next to a jewelry manufacturing company, *Frost and Guy*. Jill gave notice to Prestige, left their employment and soon organized the equipment required for a finishing school. That consisted of make-up tables with plenty of mirrors and fluorescent lighting. The large mirrors showed the students their postures while sitting, standing and walking. A large part of the room was occupied by an elevated platform with steps on both sides to allow for the students to practice and demonstrate their newly taught ability to walk gracefully.

There were lessons in etiquette, and many facets of turning the young, sometimes slightly uncouth, ducklings into glamorous swans. Jill was fortunate to arrange to give classes at several Wellington girls' schools. Later to have the girls come to '*The Academy*' dressed in mufti for more advanced lessons. After several years the new students were proudly telling Jill that their mothers, and even some of their grandmothers, had been students at *The Academy*.

With so many highly complimentary statements there was a most unwelcome occurrence. It was at a function at the Beehive (The Parliamentary offices) when six-foot-three Mister Frank Renouf came stalking up to five-foot-two Jill and in a loud voice declaimed: "Well, how is your little business coming along?" Jill was not amused by this impolite outburst, but having been politely brought up tactfully ignored the possible slight. After the Renouf organization's debacle and financial collapse, it was only his death that prevented Jill from asking Frank: "*how his little business now went?*"

Jill's *Academy* grew rapidly and she moved her school closer to the central city in the Sanitarium Healthfood building at 248 Lambton Quay. Again the interior was fitted with lots of mirrors, lights, chandeliers, and the elevated stage. After

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several years *The Academy* again became too small and Jill took over the fifth floor at 330 Lambton Quay. She then occupied sufficient space to allow for three classes to be conducted simultaneously. Her staff grew with the number of students but the time involved in conducting her business affairs became more and more demanding. It was difficult running a school and taking care of a husband and Jill finally decided to sell and become a full time wife. From then on we could travel to our heart's content and continued to do so, as long as my health allowed.

## THE LASTING MARRIAGE

I first met Jill on 10 December 1963 and she lived through all my problems with the Enzlon fiasco. I was introduced to Jill's grandmother in Waikanae and spent time with her parents in Auckland. The only problem that I faced was our difference in age, Jill being twenty-four years younger. Nasty tongues in Wellington could not help themselves from loudly declaiming that it was terrible that such an old man (I was all of forty-three) went out with such a young girl. When we announced our intention to get married, there were bets on how long such a marriage would last. At the date of this biography I can only point out to all my detractors that we have celebrated forty second wedding anniversary and have been blessed with a wonderful marriage.

In December 1964 I drove to Auckland to celebrate Jill's twenty-first birthday party that her parents, Dick and Sybil, had arranged. I managed to concoct a fruit punch bowl, which I surreptitiously spiked with vodka. It resulted in Jill's younger brothers becoming gently plastered to their parent's horror. Jill did not drink at this stage and her sisters were still too young to drink.

Two years later in December 1966 Jill and I decided to get married and when I spoke to Dick there was much banter and discussion about how many sheep I had to bring as an appropriate dowry. Jill's parents decided on the date of February 25 1967, for the wedding and that it would be held in the family home. Jill and I went to see the Reverend Jolly at the Methodist Church in Papatoetoe to be interviewed. Much was made of the fact that I was a divorced person. Much more of a fuss was made since I insisted on my new wife traveling on a passport in her new name. A passport in the name of von Kohorn would have to be delivered to Reverend Jolly and handed by him to Jill once the ceremony had taken place.

On the other side of the globe there were arrangements I had to make to have a member from my family attend the wedding. My brother



Henry was happy to hop on a plane to be at the wedding. He suggested that Jill and I join him after the festivities and we could fly together to Taiwan where Henry's wife Marcy would join us. It was a delightful but obviously very chaperoned honeymoon. On the 24<sup>th</sup> February Henry arrived at Wellington and met Jill. She claimed that when he stepped off the plane, with a northern hemisphere pale skin, she felt immediately motherly towards her more than thirty years older brother in law.



I still had to select from my associates and close friends those who would attend my wedding. Ron Jarden offered to be best man and Richard Heron my groomsman. Alex Watson, our accountant, Jill's brothers and sisters each undertook some wedding tasks. Jill's best friend, Liz Craddock was our bridesmaid.



Shortly after announcing our engagement we were in Auckland at the time that the retiring American Consul General was returning by ship to the USA. He invited us aboard for luncheon. We had such fun that on the spur of the moment I suggested that we could arrange for a cabin and be married at sea by the captain. As tempting as it sounded the elopement was not to happen. Jill insisted;

“That is not possible because I do not have with me the special off white doe skin shoes.” The shoes had been especially made in Hong Kong to match her wedding dress and were in a box in Wellington. In retrospect it was just as well Jill refused the maritime marriage as her family would have felt a bit miffed.

All went beautifully well at the wedding breakfast that was held in my father in law’s cavernous agricultural shed. In my speech I pointed out that Dick had not lost a daughter, but had gained an older brother (Dick was three months my junior). Once married Jill moved into my bachelors apartment at Herbert Gardens on The Terrace where we still live today.

In 1961 Frank Renouf was chairman of a newly formed company called Property Securities Ltd. He played with the idea of building Wellington’s highest, most modern and most luxurious apartment building. He had negotiated the purchase of land on one of the high points of The Terrace, along the Kumutoto gully, formerly the property of the Herbert Family with acreage including a tennis court and, gardens famous for its trees.

Our apartment was on the twelfth rather than the top floor that I originally selected. One of the directors of the Fletcher Construction who was building the factory at Shannon suggested that a top floor apartment would most likely be subjected to a leaking roof. Thus it was better to be one floor down and let someone else enjoy those problems and sacrifice some of the view. For many years that was not a problem and we enjoyed panoramic views of the Lambton Harbour, the whole of Port Nicholson and surrounding mountain ranges. It was not until the nineteen eighties that our view of the Lambton Harbour became restricted.

I designed our apartment rather than accepting the architect plans. I wanted a free standing stove in the kitchen, a separate dining room and large master bedroom. On the south side of the apartment I provided for an office for both Jill and I to use. That has a separate entrance to the lobby that subsequent became disused and turned into a cupboard.

The apartment was of course furnished with fine carpets and furniture from Bishopstowe. The walls displayed my Flemish art collection as well as other more modern paintings. The Wedgewood porcelain that I had collected while living in USA was displayed in glass fronted cabinets that I had designed and had made in White Plains. Similarly displayed is the jade that I first collected when at school in Tokyo.

On one of our July 1977 visits to Sydney I spent some time with my daughter Karen. We had lunch at a German restaurant at The Rocks and she told me all



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about having been given a job with one of her mother's girl friends. Karen was to be employed as an assistant to Florence Broadhurst who owned a small factory and showroom in Paddington in Sydney. She designed and hand printed wallpapers for private customers.

Jill and I were immediately interested and decided to have special wallpaper produced for our apartment in Wellington. With the larger than normal bedroom, we decided on a more unusual use of wallpaper by having the entire wall behind the beds covered with a flower pattern design on a gold background. The other three walls of the bedroom were to be covered with the same gold paper, but perfectly plain without any design.



The living room walls were to be covered with a classic armorial design in a light beige color. We only had vague measurements of the two rooms and promised to advise the required rolls of paper after returning to Wellington. To be on the safe side we finally ordered ample rolls to cover any possible shortage discovered when wall papering. Fortuitously the wall papers proved to be of perfect design and quality and today, more than twenty years later, we are still enjoying the paper.

In the front office of Florence's factory were a few displays of Chinese antiques including a black lacquer cabinet that Jill and I greatly admired. We came to some arrangement and arranged to ship it home with the wallpaper.

My former wife, now Diana Richardson and Diana Broadhurst were close friends and both were great believers in the miracle cancer cures of a Philippine psychic. In Sydney the psychic Diana Shaw, collected twelve other believers

and they all flew to Manila together for psychic cancer treatments, which ultimately proved to be totally unproductive.

On a Saturday afternoon, October 16<sup>th</sup>, fortunately when Karen was not at work, a person broke into the factory and battered Florence Broadhurst to death, robbing her of her rings and cash. The murder remains unsolved to this time.

During the sixties I had become associated with one of Taiwan's largest carpet manufacturing companies, New Taiwan Product Company Limited. Henry, our company and myself also had private investments in other Taiwan enterprises. There were currency restrictions in Taiwan and thus holidaying there meant that we could use some of the surpluses that were accumulating.

After an early breakfast in Auckland the wedding party and all the family dutifully waived us farewell and *bon voyage*. We flew via Sydney and my long time business associate Doug Watt and his wife Millicent met us at the airport and stayed with us while we waited for the Air New Zealand flight to Hong Kong. We arrived there at six fifteen in the evening, fourteen hours since having left Auckland. As usual we stayed at the Peninsula Hotel in Kowloon. At the Kaitak airport one of the hotel's ubiquitous Rolls Royce limousines was waiting for us. That year it was a gold green colour. Jill enjoyed her first ride in one of their annually replaced beautifully shiny cars with liveried chauffeur.

In those days the international airport was still located on Kowloon amidst the ever growing high rise buildings. The pilot's guided their huge planes to the scarily short runway of the former home base of Cathay Pacific Airways.

My parents had been guests at the Peninsula since their first visit in 1932 and both Henry and I had stayed there on several occasions while flying from Manila to Taipei. As "long time guests" we were assigned to one of the top floor luxury suites that embodied everyone's idea of "typical Chinese." There was red lacquer, black lacquer, gold motifs and wood carvings. The bathrooms had been modernized and had marble floors and walls. There were enormous mirrors, luxurious bathrobes, and three telephones. One near the hand basins, one reachable from the marble bathtub and one, believe it, next to the loo. In those days the rooms still had a view of the harbour now unfortunately blocked by new structures.

Instead of having an early night, we decided to wander hand in hand to Nathan Road, so that Jill could see the vendors and stalls in the hotel's neighborhood. We resisted sampling food from the many outdoor kitchens and returned tiredly to the magnificence of our Chinese red and gold lacquered bedchamber.

Jill's previous foreign visits had only been to Australia and I was looking forward to showing her Taiwan, meeting our staff and the many close friends and acquaintances.

After the comparatively short flight to Taipei, we landed at the military airport built by the occupying American forces and gifted to the Chang Kai Chek Government. Until the international airport was built, the military facilities were used for all flights.

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The visit of Henry, and Ralph with a new bride, gave an opportunity for our successful local company to “pull out all stops” and celebrate our arrival “in style”.

When our plane landed and the steps had been secured to the door, we were ushered first off the plane. We walked between a row of smiling and bowing couples. They were from the government, our bankers and the staff of our company’s factory in Towfen. General Lin headed the line of people. We were whisked through customs and immigration, the luggage attended to and soon our small cavalcade of cars took us to the Grand Hotel. The hotel’s staff and a director attended to registration and quickly guided us to our rooms. Henry’s wife Marcy had flown directly from Connecticut to Taipei and we all met at the hotel where I introduced Jill to her new sister in law.

The hotel was owned by Madame Chiang Kai Chek and had been built for the American and top allied military personnel. At the end of the war, part of the hotel had been released for private use. The beautiful interior, designed in Chinese Imperial style, had wide corridors with red carpets, high columns between each room and bathrooms of marble and glass interiors. Whereas the Peninsula in Kowloon had been westernized the Grand Hotel was in Chinese style and both were equal in their different opulence. By the time we had been conducted to our rooms, the luggage had been magically transferred and was awaiting us in our suite. The mostly youthful male staff were dressed in white uniforms wearing small round caps and jackets with shiny gold buttons.

Once settled in it was time to proceed to lunch. We “removed ourselves” to the dining hall for the first of numerous meals, both for the mid day and more importantly for the evening feasts that followed day by day for the next fortnight. Each senior person of our organization appeared to have been required to act as host for at least one of the daily midday feasts. They usually took the same form, with a number of round tables and each table seating ten people. The meal would be listed on a typewritten menu with each course described. It would always include at least one sharks fin soup and for foreigners, the obligatory Peking Duck, with other courses following in happy succession. Henry, Marcy, Jill and I were carefully seated together at one table to minimize the Chinese/English language difficulty with our hosts. The food was accompanied by plum wine and at each table had to survive what I thought were uncountable toasts from each person to each of us. We did not follow the rule to toast each person back, and after only a small number of “*kampeys*” we thanked our hosts and staggering slightly retreated back to our hotel.

Our banker’s in Taiwan were the Chang Hwa Bank and one of its branch directors, Y C Wu, had appointed himself chaperon and advisor for our local financial matters. Whenever we arrived at the Taipei airport, he would be waiting for us with a delegation of associates. From 1967 on we made many trips to Taiwan. Jill and Marcy set up a routine to have miscellaneous items of apparel and accessories cut, sewn and fitted for them, including snake skin shoes and handbags. Henry and I also used local tailors, shirt and shoemakers, relishing in the bargain basement prices.

Jill had a ball at her first Taiwan visit. By that time our operation at Towfen had become most lucrative, the funds, which were not exportable had been invested in local industries and multiplied. I had providently negotiated for Y. C. Wu, a branch manager of the Chang Hwa Bank in Taipei, to invest our funds with secure companies and appointed Henry and myself, directors of these operations. When first negotiating our investment I was told that the standard rate of return was two to three percent.

“But the Swiss banks pay two per cent,” I objected.

“Yes but we can earn two per cent per month,” and that clinched the deal.

Y. C. handled all financial and legal matters and even negotiated that after five years and payment of the local taxes, we could remit our Taiwanese holdings overseas. In the meantime we could spend our local funds on anything our hearts desired. Our money became like Monopoly money and we had the time of our lives ordering clothing, shoes, bags, any other accoutrements and even tickets for air travel anywhere in the world. Jill and I had a whale of a time flying throughout Europe, America and Asia on the proceeds for the next several years.

One evening one of the co-directors of New Taiwan Products Company, Mr. Wu, invited Henry, Marcy, Jill and me for dinner to his home. Although very wealthy, he preferred to live anonymously and quietly in the warehouse district in one of his old warehouses. The inside had been converted into a home, but it was crowded from top to bottom with many treasures and was more of a museum than a residence. There were large and small vases of porcelain and bronze. Rows of carved jade animals, some in small silk boxes, and some on blackwood stands. Fringed silken carpets of different lengths, some rolled, some stored flat. Screens inlaid with carved semi-precious stones and mother-of-pearl. There were painted scrolls and calligraphy, tasseled candle lanterns and ivory figures, interlocking ivory balls, small elephants, their trunks held high and large carved elephant tusks. A carved altar table held a collection of polished bronze dressing mirrors, numerous jade bowls and Hindu religious sculptures. There were enameled chests and tables and even Chinese clocks, ticking and showing time. We were slowly taken along rows of shelves as Mr. Wu explained his collection of treasures.

It was only fair that as long as we were in Taiwan, we should see something of that country. Madame not only owned the Taipei Grand, but also another luxury hotel in the Taiwanese mountains at Sun Moon Lake. Reservations were easily made and we took the train to Sun Moon. Finally we would have a true honeymoon without family and we were left to ourselves for a week of uninterrupted bliss. With unlimited cash we could splurge and buy utter nonsense such as a stuffed owl. That caused us great problems with the agricultural inspectors in New Zealand until sprayed and decontaminated. Eventually it was returned to us undamaged.

At the end of this tour we immediately sat on carved blackwood chairs with flat silk-covered cushions around a table large enough to comfortably seat ten. We

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were told that the cook, who had prepared the meal for us, was one of the Generalissimo's personal chefs and had been loaned to our host for the evening. We were suitably impressed and several times expressed our appreciation for the great honor bestowed by our host. The meal was undoubtedly superb, but on us somewhat wasted. We had registered a certain amount of consternation when we received the original invitation because we were informed that the *pièce de resistance* was a soup made from two kinds of poisonous snakes. We were assured it had been carefully prepared with all the poison removed. After two weeks of daily wining and dining in Taipei, we would have gladly traded jellied 'hundred year old eggs' or live baby shrimps for a juicy piece of rare steak or even a plate of ham and eggs. We remained the typical *gwailos*, foreigners, who enjoyed visiting but were always glad to get back on the plane to fly home to European food. There are, however, some Chinese dishes that Jill and I particularly love. On top of the list is a bowl of authentic "number one quality" sharks' fin soup, not the canned variety, but the real stuff, which is almost impossible to find in Chinese restaurants today. The second dish, which is much easier to obtain, is Peking duck. It has to be prepared by a master chef with the roasted skin paper-thin and the meat expertly sliced. The sweet plum sauce, properly thick and oozy, completes the pleasure of rolling the perfectly cooked crepes in which to convey the duck slices, topped with spring onion, to one's mouth.

We had one free evening and Jill and I decided to go to the Golden Dragon restaurant of the Grand Hotel where we were staying. We telephoned in the afternoon and discussed with the headwaiter this special meal of only sharks' fin soup and Peking duck. We ate very early and a corner table had been set for us in the huge gold and red lacquer dining room. A rather large covered soup tureen with a matching porcelain ladle was brought and placed before us in the middle of the table and the waiter filled our bowls with the soup. There was enough soup to feed an army, let alone two. We helped ourselves and filled the bowls several times before we gave up and asked the waiter to take away the remaining soup and serve the duck. The soup was perfect. It was thick and glutinous from the boiled fins and we both agreed that it was a soup one could kill for.

The duck was as good as the soup. We ate and ate and ate. It must have been a very large duck, because in spite of our resolve to finish every last bit, we finally had to give in and ask for the dishes to be removed. I hate to think of the cholesterol we consumed but this was a special occasion and one is permitted to exceed the limit just once in a while.

The other great soup delicacy is birds' nest soup made of the saliva of swallows. Special collectors laboriously gather the nests. It can only be obtained by climbing high cliffs overhanging caves on the islands where the birds normally build their nests. This is one occasion where nothing is destroyed, since the nests are only collected after the fledglings have flown. We never found the soup very exciting, it tasted more like boiled straw and we never went out of our way to order it.

Our second trip to make good use of our Taiwanese funds started on 12<sup>th</sup> of June 1967. We flew to Manila via Sydney and stayed at the Manila Hotel. There, Jill experienced her first blind masseur. He was led to our room by a young guide who later came back to retrieve his blind human master. From Manilla we went to Taipei where we again met up with Henry and Marcy and had a wonderful time. We stayed until late July and then flew home via Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore to meet our friends Chong Kee and Karlotta Tan. Chong was our agent for Indonesia. After a short stop in Djakarta we flew once more to Singapore, before returning via Darwin and Brisbane to Sydney. We arrived back in Wellington on 1<sup>st</sup> August.

We next decided to visit my family in the USA. We had Burns Philp prepare our itinerary and departed Wellington on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Our first stop was Sydney so that we could meet up with our Australian associate, Doug and Millicent Watt and to see my children. After a few days we continued our trip leaving on the 19<sup>th</sup> for Taipei via Manila and Hong Kong arriving there in the evening. We again stayed at the Grand Hotel. We did our usual round of shopping, trying on the pre-ordered dresses for Jill and suits for me, bought a few trinkets and made the round of recommended eateries.

Another evening we had been invited to attend the famous Chinese Circus. It consisted of the usual acrobats, jugglers, tight rope walkers etcetera but one had to admit that the craft of the circus artists was superb and often gave heart stopping performances. When leaving the hotel we always carried a small card showing the name of the destination in Chinese to show to the driver and thus facilitating a quick trip to where we intended going and back home.

For this trip Jill had taken on the task of writing a column for the Wellington evening paper under the heading of *Womens News*. She reported on her travels and multiple foreign visits, as seen through the eyes of a young New Zealander.

We arrived at Tokyo via Osaka on September 27<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon and checked in at the Hotel New Otani. In Tokyo I had made reservations at the Imperial Hotel, mostly to show Jill the rooms in the old section of the earthquake-proof hotel designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. This was the hotel where my family had lived back in 1936 when I arrived from Switzerland.

Jill's first visit to Tokyo required the obligatory visit to the Tokyo Tower and I had fun taking her to some of the wonderful restaurants like The Genji, the Akasaka Misono and others on the Ginza. I showed her our former Tokyo office in the Kikumasamune Building, my old favourite The German Bakery and visited the Hipo Bar in the Tokyo Hilton. We then hired a car with driver to take us to Yokohama, my old stomping ground, school and residence, thirty years previously.

We drove to the former Rising Sun Compound and photographed my former home, now totally overgrown. We searched and found the entrance to the Yokohama Country and Athletic Club, with its admonishing sign, *MEMBERS ONLY*. A helpful functionary willingly checked my name from a bundle of cards



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listing all former members. I photographed the tennis courts my brother had played on during the summers and I had skated on during winters.

We then left Tokyo and flew directly to Honolulu on Japan Airlines, with its well-deserved renowned cabin service.

At Honolulu I had made reservations at the recently completed Ilikai Hotel. This was a sister hotel to the Radisson in Cleveland where I had lived in my pre war days while working for National Rayon. I rented a car and took Jill on a quick tour around Oahu Island. We arrived in New York on October 2<sup>nd</sup> after a stop over in San Francisco. Henry and Marcy met us at Kennedy International Airport and took us to Greenwich in Connecticut.

My first pleasant duty was to introduce Jill to my mother in New York. My mother lived in an apartment at Hotel Adams and insisted that next day we use her subscription seats, third row center at the Metropolitan Opera in the Lincoln Center Plaza. It was October 3<sup>rd</sup> and Leontyne Price was singing in *La Forza del Destino*. I succeeded in making Jill a Philistine like myself and talked her out of sitting through the whole opera. We walked out after intermission and went to one of my old time favourite restaurants, Reubens for Steak Tartare, Cheesecake and Pots of Coffee.

Everybody wanted to take us to different restaurants. We ate at Toots Shor on Fifty Second Street, The Twenty One, Round Table on Fiftieth and The Oyster Bar at the Grand Central where I had learned to again eat oysters.

My mother, still trying to ram culture down my throat, insisted on our going the following week, on October 10, to *Romeo and Juliet*. At the end of the first act I thought it was a perfect time to walk out and take Jill to The Playboy Club, of which I was a paid up member. I had some of the Club's fancy drinks with lots of alcohol; Jill still insisted on lots of fruit juice.

I had joined the New York Playboy club when it first opened. Membership gave you a key engraved with the club's logo. The logo was the head of a rabbit with two prominent ears. And thus the club was soon known as The Bunny Club. The cost of the key was Twenty-Five Dollars and also gave access to the club in Chicago. Other clubs were promised to follow. Hugh Hefner was also the owner and editor of the well known girly magazine *Esquire*. My "key" carries the number NY 9690. The club was located on Sixty Sixth Street between Fifth and Madison Avenues in a former private residence. My thoughts were that this was another wonderful way to impress my dates. Parking was not too difficult at night and being able to ushering your date through the marble and glass doors into the entrance hall by virtue of a magic key could hardly be topped.

Drinks came in crystal glasses, engraved with the "bunny" logo and served by gorgeous, long legged young ladies with a bunny tail, and long bunny ears attached to their heads. Club rules were strict. Conversation was encouraged, but touching was cause for the waitresses' immediate dismissal. Charges for the drinks were high, engraved ashtrays and glasses equally costly. But buying a souvenir for your date always proved to be much appreciated. Jill and I made

it a point to visit Playboy Clubs in several cities and had a collection of engraved 'bunny' pewter tankards from New York, Los Angeles, London, Miami, and others.

There were plenty of cars available from the family. We borrowed one and drove to Washington DC. There we stayed at the Howard Johnson Motor Lodge and did things like photographing Jill at the back of the White House and in front of the Washington Monument. We ate at Blackbeard's Restaurant and looked at the First National Bank of Washington.

We drove back to Greenwich and Henry junior took us to Jill's first American football game. His school, Princeton, played against Ken's school, Yale. Sorry to say neither Jill nor I can remember which university won the game on that day.

I had arranged for Doug and Millicent Watt and Ron Jarden to join me in New York so as to convene Genrock Holding's annual board meeting. Thus I considered our trips to be business expenses. I made reservations for my co-directors at a hotel, on Broadway and Fifty Seventh Street. There they were close to New York's amusement center, which gave me an opportunity to entertain Ron, Doug and his wife Millicent by taking them to a few well known restaurants, movie theatres and above all to the "Big Apple's" best known night club. We had reservations for front row seats at Lou Walter's Wintergarten. What is generally not known is that the now famous television presenter and interviewer Barbara Walter is the daughter of erstwhile Broadway producer Lou Walter.

The Wintergarten was New York's equivalent to the Parisian *Moulin Rouge* and *Follies Bergere* with beautiful tall nude girls, kicking their long legs in unison in a chorus line. The city's puritan ordinances prohibited the dancers to be totally naked. This law that was cleverly overcome, by each girl's nipples being covered by a minute, silver colored circle known as a "pastie".

A few years later the Wintergarten became infamous for a fire that had totally destroyed the club and killed dozens of patrons due to smoke inhalation. In contravention of regulations the fire exit doors were securely locked.

After one month in New York and Connecticut, it was time to move on. We made reservations to fly PANAM from New York City to London on November 2<sup>nd</sup> leaving by the evening flight to arrive at 9:30 in the morning. My logbook showed that this was my seventieth Atlantic crossing. On the same page in the log it registers my fifty-third Equator, seventeenth Tasman, and twenty-third Pacific (Date Line) crossings. The hotel sent us their limousine and by noon we were happily ensconced at the Park Lane Hotel. November fifth was a commemoration car rally to Brighton and we stood for hours in Hyde Park photographing the antique cars parading. At the same time the British Hussar regiment, wearing their enormous Busby hats, and a Life Guard regiment with red cloaks and golden helmets passed by as part of the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace.

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We went to a comedy at the Apollo Theatre and at the Ambassador theatre saw a performance of *The Mousetrap*, which ran for several years.

In Wellington we had been driving a three-liter Rover and had ordered the new model, to be delivered to us in London for our coming trip through Europe. After our arrival we checked with the Rover Company and were told that there was a delay of several months and we could not expect delivery in time to suit our travel plans. Fortunately we went to the Annual Motor Show at Earl's Court. The main exhibit, gleaming and sparkling on a raised platform, was a *Daimler Majestic Major* with which we both immediately fell in love.

The car was silver on the bottom and black on top. We went to the Daimler exhibitors and asked whether we could purchase the exhibit for immediate delivery. Alas, the car had been presold to a client in Scotland. I was willing to pay in US currency on the spot and that softened the Scots heart. He relented and the car was ours. It took only three days to prepare the car, which we christened *The Duchess*. With licence plate number NHP413F and a large oval New Zealand plaque on the left rear, we took off on what turned out to be an eleven thousand mile journey.

It was November 10<sup>th</sup> and our first stay was at Stratford-upon-Avon and we had a quick look at what every Shakespeare visitor "must see". The next stop was Gretna Green where we saw the original Marriage Room at Gretna Hall. Onward to Scotland, Brunton Turrett, Mary Queen of Scots House, Kinross and Edinburgh. By that time *The Duchess* had acquired a Royal Automobile Club and an Automobile Club plaque on her front bumper.

We visited Dundee and Aberdeen, turned southeast across the Firth of Forth Bridge and then drove straight down to London. Before leaving we went up the Post Office Tower on Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> and enjoyed 'An Orbit' while having a meal at the *Top of the Tower Restaurant*.

The next day we drove east to Dover and put the *Duchess* on the ferry for France. We watched the White Cliffs of Dover slowly recede and on arrival in Boulogne drove the car across the first of many future border crossings. Paris, where to begin? We carefully arrived on a Saturday when all the shops were closed. We had lunch at Montmartre and in the evening dined on one of the glass bubble boats on the Seine.

The next morning we left Paris on our way to Brussels. Very heavy fog covered the motorway. We heard the crashing of cars all around us and pulled onto the verge with a huge twelve wheeler giving us protection. When fog lifted we drove on and arrived without further excitement. We left the next day for Amsterdam via a short visit to Compiègne to look at the railway carriage where the 1918 peace treaty was signed.

On November 11<sup>th</sup> we collected our first Parking Violation in Amsterdam and later collected a police notification in The Hague. We had a walk along one of the canals and looked at flower sellers.

We drove via Cologne where we picked up another parking violation and then to Bonn. We stopped over night at a castle at Gondorf on the Mosel owned by the Baron Liebig family. The exterior castle was ornate, the interior cold but the staff were very friendly. In 1918 the old Baron Liebig had been one of my father's partners in the Erste Boehmische Kunstseiden Fabrik. I asked the headwaiter if we could meet the present Baron. That was arranged the next morning and after a rather emotional meeting he showed us through the castle.

We then left for Luxemburg and back east to the Rhein (Rhine). We visited several vineyards and tasted Niersteiner, Sylvaner and German Alsatian wines. Then we drove via Phalsbourg to Zürich in Switzerland where we stayed at the Baur au Lac. I was disappointed that my old friend Napoléon, the former maître d' was no longer active. I learned where his residence was and called on him. I wished I had not. I found an old man, who had lost all his vigour and commanding personality. He was now emaciated and obviously a very sick man.

Our next stop was to my former boarding school in St. Gallen, The Institute on the Rose Mountain. Here too I wished I had not come. What had been an imposing school before the war was now an elderly assembly of buildings with to my eyes a few very young students and teachers. We did not spend more time in Switzerland and soon were on our way across just one more border to Germany.

We were headed for München and stayed at the Vier Jahreszeiten Hotel. For a late lunch I insisted on our having White Sausages that I had always enjoyed as a child. White Sausage aficionados dictate that they must be consumed before the noontime bells ring from the Frauenkirche (Womens Church). Once the bell rang, any uneaten sausages were thrown away and a new lot made the next morning.

The following day we crossed the border and went on our way to Vienna. We passed the glorious Salzburg Castle, covered in snow and sped down *The Autobahn* that was Adolf Hitler's pride and joy. There was little traffic and our English licensed Daimler Major drew a lot of interest in both the cities and comparatively rarely visited villages.

We stayed in a mid city hotel and I searched for Fred Wodak, one of the former main suppliers of stamps for my Austrian stamp collection. We took Fred with us for a meal in the Wiener Wald (Viennese Woods). I took Jill to several *Heurigen* restaurants that offered the first servings of the current seasons wine. A green bough on a stick over the entrance identifies these restaurants.

This was the time when the famous *Christkindl* (Christmas child) Market was in operation and street vendors' booths were set up along the main streets. We bought a string of miniature twelve-volt Christmas lights to decorate the rear window of the Duchess. The lights were brought back to New Zealand and eventually found their way to *Columbia* and for many years were part of her Christmas attire. I took Jill to my aunt Paula's former Coffee House *Die Goldene Spinne* (The golden spider) in the Ungar Gasse. My Mother had often

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told me about the café but I had never been taken there as a child. Like a lot of things remembered from childhood, reality to an adult was not special. As in all coffee houses there was a rack holding newspapers from around Europe for patrons to peruse. We also went and looked at the outside of the Schwarzenberg Palais, our former Viennese office

We then headed South and West as I wanted to show Jill the hotel my parents had stayed in for such a long time at Badgastein. We stayed overnight and met our pastor Lebouton at the First Lutheran Church where Dad's name was inscribed as a donor towards the reconstruction of the church. The next day we took the Tunnel train from Austria to Italy. We drove our car directly onto rail freight cars and then sat in a carriage for the passage. The train took us through the Tauern tunnel from Böckstein to Mallnitz. From there the highway dropped down into Italy where Jill and I had promised to meet an elderly lady. One of my partners in the restaurant ventures had been Ido de Bernardo. He was born in Italy and had often told me of his elderly mother. She lived near Cortina d' Ampezzo and could be found at a coffee shop in the square. A promise is a promise even though there was no way to warn the old lady of our arrival. Undaunted we drove up to the coffee house in the village Belluno and



asked for the widow Gracioso Cian, in Domegge di Cadore. We finally met a very old lady dressed in black and in spite of our best efforts were not able to communicate, even with assistance of willing neighbors. At least we had tried.

We spent the night at Cortina and then drove the short distance to Venice to stay the following night. We of course fed the pigeons on Piazza San Marco, had dressed up gondolieri propel us around on gondolas, stumbled over the

Bridge of Sighs, and ate at several highly touted but hardly worthwhile remembering restaurants along one of the canals.

It was cold so "Go South." I declared. After a visit to San Marino we dropped down to sea level and along the Adriatic coast to Termoli, inland to Foggia and across the middle of Italy to Naples. From miles away we could see the outline of the volcano and the ever-present plume of smoke escaping Mt. Versuvius. We had been advised to drive to Sorrento and stay there for a day. Without reservations I found it easiest to go to the top luxury hotel and let the car speak for us. During the war the German High Command had sequestered the hotel *Tramontano*, overlooking the Bay of Naples. What was good enough for the Nazis was good enough for us and I asked for a suite. We were given a beautifully decorated living room with adjoining bedroom and modern bathroom. The Nazis had known how to please their *Obercommando*.

Jill had heard about the famous embroiderers of Sorrento, and the concierge recommended Signora Fioretto. We left the car behind and walked the narrow lanes to the home of the elderly lady who had been recommended. Both Jill and I ordered one dozen handkerchiefs, embroidered with our initials surmounted by our baronial crest. The workmanship was simply unbelievable and we both still use our hankies, thirty years later, more as souvenirs than to blow our noses.

We went down the steep hill of Sorrento to the Bay where hundreds of bathing huts on piers jutted out into the blue, blue water. After an unmemorable meal of fish we continued our journey to Rome. I had been taken to Rome as a child but had no recollection of the visit. So for both of us it was an introduction to the glorious city.



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When driving towards Rome we passed a motel flying an Australian flag. We drove in, decided to check in and used the motel as our headquarters. A young Australian couple owned it and when they saw our oval NZ plate, we were made doubly welcome. We asked them what to visit first, were directed to the Trevi Fountain and threw a few Liras into the pool below. The wishes worked as we actually came back to Rome a number of years later. We then drove up to and around the monument to King Vittorio Emanuel that I personally thought



was far more magnificent than the Colosseum, which we later visited.

Unquestionably most memorable was a visit to the Vatican. Cars were not permitted in the Square but sightseeing buses roamed around freely. We tagged on to a group of visitors with an English speaking guide. We had been advised to go for an evening meal at *Alfredo's* and order spaghetti with his famous Sauce Alfredo. We did and like all other guests had our photo taken for posterity. We returned for a second evening meal and photograph at the restaurant.

When leaving Rome we headed for the comparatively short drive on the Autostrada via Firenze to Pisa, to visit or climb the famous leaning tower. On arrival we were told that once again the tower was in 'bad shape' and undergoing a measurement of the tilt with further studies on how to prevent it

from toppling over. The only item that concerned us was a restriction prohibiting visitors from climbing more than twenty steps up the round interior stairwell. Obviously the scientists must have done something right as the *Leaning Tower of Pisa* is still standing.

Our next stop was Genoa (Genovo), Italy's major port in the Ligurian Sea, due north of the French island of Corsica. I was not very interested in stopping at Genoa and have no memory of anything we visited. We decided to give the port a miss and hoped for more excitement in the Principality of Monaco that has been ruled by the Princes of Monaco for 700 years. After San Marino, Monaco is the second smallest independent state in the world.

We drove up to and checked in at the Hotel de Paris, across the park from the Monte Carlo casino and gaming rooms. I wanted Jill to 'have a flutter'. With her good protestant upbringing she absolutely refused to place even one single 'cheton' on the game board or roulette wheel number so we went back to the hotel and had a rest. In the evening we put our more 'dressy' clothes on and went to the casino restaurant touted highly as one of Europe's finest kitchens. I do not remember what fabulous food we had, but I do have the label from the wine we were offered. It was a bottle of Drapier & Fils *Meursault*, memorable more for the price than the quality.

The next morning was my birthday and we drove from the Hotel to the commercial/business district to look at some of the shops. We parked and came back within half an hour. Too late as the car had collected what was called a 'Public Parking Offence' (our fourth on this trip) that we again ignored and continued our Odyssey. We followed the winding coast road to Nice with its boulder covered Riviera beach front. I took a photograph of Jill standing on the rocky foreshore. Compared to the beaches of New Zealand Jill was not impressed by the Riviera. In Cannes we checked in at the Hotel Splendid on Rue Felix Faure that had an underground garage. Despite Jill's reluctance the next morning we were off again and zoomed through Toulon on our way to Marseille. I had previously stopped there at the airport when flying from Tripoli to Paris and had been told of the fabulous meals with local mussels (moules meuniere). We had a quick stop at the Crillon De Brave Hotel and a leisurely meal of mussels. I did not think they were fantastic but they were very spicy and I could have cut the smell of garlic with a knife.

The next day we drove to Perpignan and across the French border into Spain on our way to Barcelona. At the border there was a very modern hotel called Ampurdan and a restaurant. What fun for me to use my Spanish and show off to Jill how clever I was in the foreign language. The hotel could only be described as so-so. Then came our first Spanish meal and we cleverly ordered *paella*. It came with tiny shrimps and rice perfectly cooked. It also came with a not so tiny tummy ache, but fortunately no further ill effect during the night. We drank the local red wine at less than a dollar a bottle and pronounced it a most satisfactory visit to Spain.

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From Barcelona our unplanned trip took us west to Zaragoza enroute to Madrid. There was a Christmas street fair on in Zaragoza. Jill and I paraded down the beflagged streets, went to a gypsy camp and one of the famous Catholic educational institution. We kept on driving through the flat sandy landscape towards Madrid, passing huge three dimensional advertising signs showing a black bull and publicizing a brand of sherry.

We reached Madrid towards the evening with the sun setting in the west, right into our eyes. Although it was coming up to Christmas we had no trouble booking into the Hotel Wellington and intended to stay until the New Year. We were intrigued by the name of the hotel that was also touted to be one of the most modern in Madrid. While I had celebrated my birthday in Monte Carlo, Jill celebrated hers in Madrid on the twenty first. That just gave her enough time to do some serious shopping. Christmas in Europe, and particularly in Spain is freezing cold at an altitude of six hundred fifty meters. Jill had been looking for a fur coat during the whole of the trip and I had agreed that if she could find one for \$100 then it would be hers. Finally she found just what she wanted in my price range. It was a suede coat with fur trim at the sleeves, the neckline and inside lined with shorn fur.

We attempted making several reservations for meals in the city and it was difficult because of the influx of country folks to the capital for the holidays. The situation was worse than we had feared. So we quickly decided on a change of plan, checked out of the Wellington and headed for Portugal. I was eager to visit Estoril, the summer capital of Portugal. We crossed from Spain to Portugal at the border between Badajoz and Estremoz and bypassed Lisboa (Lisbon) driving straight to Setubal and Sintra. Here reservations would have been helpful as the coast at Estoril was very crowded. We did the usual trick, had the car washed after the lengthy drive and when it was gleaming swept up to the Palacio Estoril Hotel and demanded a small suite. Most of the staff spoke English, acknowledged the English licence number, and luckily for us provided most acceptable accommodation at the Palacio.

The difference between Spain and Portugal was particularly obvious. Spain was not a friend of England and the citizens would not acknowledge English. In Portugal the people were definitely Anglophilic, would try to speak English and showed us a most friendly side. Even the fifth traffic violation (this time for speeding) was kindly printed in English, and by us promptly forgotten. Estoril was beautiful and warm, noticeably so after the cold of Madrid.

Portugal is also a country of wine. I was of course familiar with the Mateus Rosé in its flat bottle, but had little knowledge of Portugal's white wines. I was greatly taken with a grape called Vinho Verde (Green Wine). Jill still refused to drink. I also made a complete fool of myself when I bought one of the leather bottles filled with cheap wine and a spigot at the bottom called a Porron. The idea was to hold the container above your head and let the wine squirt into your mouth from a distance of about half a meter. Everybody of course watched and enjoyed it when I successfully squirted the wine all over my shirt and jacket. Perhaps you had to be a local to master the clever procedure.

After New Year we continued the trip, crossed back into Spain and went to see the Gypsy villages. We drove to Sevilla, probably the country's most Moorish town, with beautiful buildings from earlier centuries of the Moorish occupation of Spain. From Sevilla we went to Granada and visited the Gardens of Neptune and saw the circus displays of 'little people'. We were guided into a Gypsy cave with the colorful ladies mostly dressed in red skirts, clapping their hands in unison. Unfortunately they did not wish to perform their famous rhythmic dances for just us two.

We then drove the 62 kilometers south to Malaga to buy a bottle of Malaga wine, and continued on via Nerja to Marbella to stay over night. The Estoril hotel had recommended we try and stay at the Marbella Club Hotel, new and overlooking both the sea and golf resort. We did not play golf, but the hotel was superb. The next morning we drove along the Mediterranean Sea west to La Linea and Gibraltar. La Linea is the open, unprotected border between Spain and Gibraltar (the overseas territory of the United Kingdom). It is capped by the Rock of Gibraltar, 426 meters high and across from Algeciras, almost the southern most point of Spain. We parked our car in a protected garage near the border, walked to the ferry terminal and bought tickets to take the short trip across the Strait of Gibraltar to Tangiers in Morocco. There was just enough time to have a late lunch and visit the Royal Moroccan Yacht Club. The club secretary was sufficiently impressed with my membership card from Mana Cruising Club in Wellington to make us honorary members and send us off with a Royal Moroccan Yacht Club membership pin. They called us a taxi and we caught the next ferry back to Gibraltar and a very satisfactory conclusion to our short visit to northeast Africa.

Having reached the bottom of Europe we had to consider the best way to get to New Zealand. While we could fly, what were we to do with our 'Duchess'? We decided on the following plan. Drive to Cadiz, (a major shipping port), get on a ferry with the car and sail to the Canary Islands. Ship the car from Las Palmas to Sydney while we would fly to South Africa and then on to Sydney. There we would be reunited with the car and take a ship to Auckland. We could then visit Jill's family and drive to Wellington, concluding our World Round Trip. The Daimler Majestic Major hopefully taking us safely "from Earl's Court to Herbert Gardens".

The Cadiz/Las Palmas car ferry left at six in the evening and was to stop in Tenerife for half a day. What we had not counted on was our luck. This was January sixth and there was to be a bullfight at the Plaza de Toros de Santa Cruz. I quickly purchased tickets from the purser of our ship and they arranged transport to and from the bullring. The Five Pound note, which I had slipped the purser, did not hurt either. He must have had an arrangement with the fight management since we were assigned the center box on the shady side of the ring with a mantilla draped over its front. I found the matadors pretty pathetic, having previously seen Manolite in Peru, but the spectators clapped wildly and one of the matadors was even awarded an ear for his efforts. The next day was Sunday and we sailed to Las Palmas where we disembarked.

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Las Palmas de Gran Canarias is a great vacation place of the dullest possible kind. The weather is glorious but there was nothing, absolutely nothing to do. The 'Duchess' was unloaded and having our own transport helped. We drove all over the island, but soon noticed a definite slackening of our usually so perky car. What was worse, the car's temperature climbed and twice we had to stop and add water to the radiator. We arranged shipment of the car on the next freighter to Sydney that left the next day.

For ourselves we booked tickets on South African Airways, leaving Las Palmas on 15 January at eleven p.m. We arrived at Johannesburg the next morning at eleven. We had ten days to potter around in South Africa to allow time for the Duchess to arrive in Sydney. The staff of South African Airways recommended The Melrose Arch Hotel and we spent a lot of time leaning out of the windows watching the tourists being pulled in rickshaw-like contraptions by Zulu's with huge feathery headdresses jumping every few meters while propelling their captive riders.

We made a few side trips and visited Pretoria only forty miles away. Then we flew to Durban (less than an hours flight) to meet with Tom Evans and his wife. Tom had been our manager in China from the 1930's through until the late fifties.

On January 24<sup>th</sup> we boarded a Qantas flight for the six and a half hour trip to Mauritius. It is called the tropical island paradise. When Jill and I visited in January 24<sup>th</sup> 1968, it was just before the island gained its independence from the UK on March 12<sup>th</sup>. There was much unrest and it was not exactly a desirable time for a visit to paradise. We had met up with a South African couple that recommended a mega dose of vitamin E against Jill's sunburn (it actually worked).

The political unrest was somewhat worrisome and we decided to hire a taxi and be driven across the island to Port Louis, the capital. We spent the night, and left there the next evening by flying South African Airways via Perth to Sydney. We arrived on the 25<sup>th</sup>, checked in at the Sydney Hilton and waited for the freighter to unload the car. The car would not start. We called the Sydney Daimler people. They came but our 'Duchess' still would not start. She was taken unceremoniously to the garage. Horrors. The problem was finally solved and the solution sounded like a detective story. When taken off the showroom floor in London, and expecting to go to wintry Scotland, the engine had been heavily provided with anti-freeze. The high temperature of Las Palmas had baked the anti-freeze in the narrow spaces of the radiator that required replacement. Since the car was still under warranty they would fly out the replacement and it would be in Sydney in three days. Good old Daimler. I could pick up our 'Duchess' in five days and schedule her shipment to Auckland accordingly.

I booked the car and us on the Marconi and as promised the Daimler was ready to be driven onto the wharf in Sydney in time for the vessel. We tried to squeeze as much fun as possible into the few days time available in Sydney.



We went to see Franquin an illusionist; to the Theatre Royal to see 'There's a Girl in my Soup'; Frank Strain's comedy 'Sesame' and had a huge steak at my favorite restaurant, The Angus Steak Cave. We tried highly recommended Australian wines from Hardy's, Sparkling Tintara Moselle, to Western Vineyards Musca d'Or, down to McWilliam's Chateau-Gay. We were farewelled by Doug and Millicent Watt amidst paper streamers, cleared the Sydney Harbor Bridge, waved goodbye to the Sydney Opera House (then under construction) and headed for Auckland.



There was no problem on arrival. Auckland harbor wharfies drove 'The Duchess' from the pier to a steam-cleaning bay of the Ministry of Agriculture. They hosed down the no doubt Aussie contaminated car and turned it over to me. We had insisted on 'no family reception committee' at the port, intending to drive up to Jill's family home in Papatoetoe and meet everybody there. I

remember Jill nervously driving the silver and black Majestic Major and pulling up to her former home after a five month odyssey. Jill's mother, brothers Peter and John, sisters Lynn and Heather, welcomed us and the 'Duchess' to their



home. After two days we left and on our way to Wellington stopped at the Wairakei hotel to let Jill have a swim in the hotel's pool. We must have stayed the night somewhere as we stopped at the Country Life Tea rooms at Waikanae for lunch. After refreshment we drove to Herbert Gardens in central Wellington where we unloaded the luggage, patted 'The Duchess' and looked forward to our first night in our own home in five months.

### CATS IN THE FAMILY

During one of Jill's radio interviews she mentioned casually that she would enjoy having a cat. She was contacted



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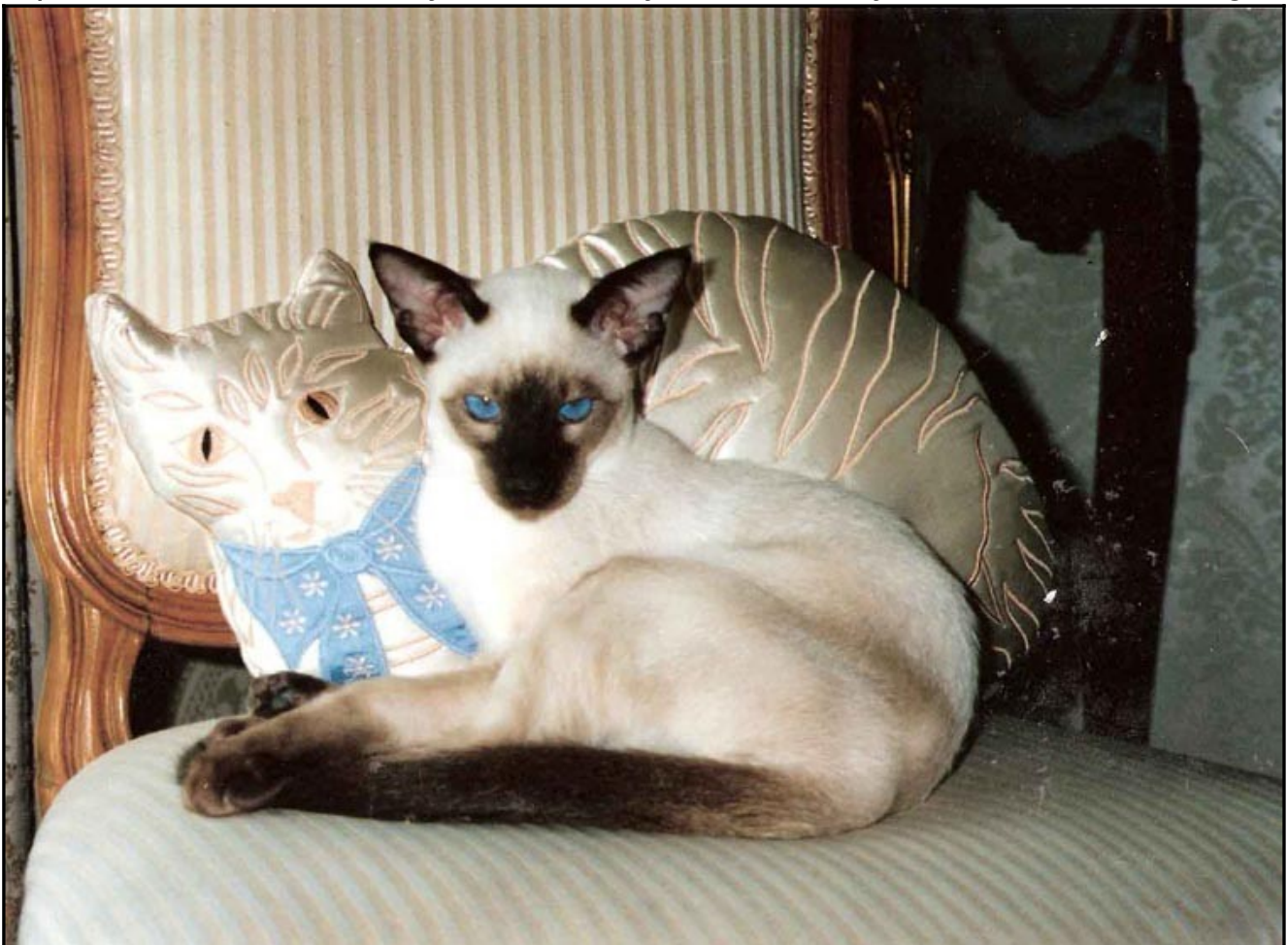
by, and liked in particular, the owner of a cattery in Blenheim. We visited the establishment and were impressed with the cleanliness of the cages and that the owner handled the kittens of the latest litter with so much love and care. We came to an arrangement and ended up by driving home with a little cat, barely the size of a package of butter.

We then looked for an appropriate name for our little kitten. This was the time of the marionette television program, Thunderbirds. The female lead was an aristocratic English person named Lady Penelope. This seemed to us a very appropriate name for our bundle of fluff that was shortened to Penny. Penny was an indoor cat and the vet trimmed her claws in the knowledge that she would not have to climb trees or defend herself in a street fight.

In the 1970's we regularly visited Hawaii during the New Zealand Spring. That meant leaving Penny, and we were lucky to be able to leave her with friends.

She became a playful and loving puss and gave us years of pleasure. She got used to being taken in a zipper bag on a small airplane or the ferry to Picton or Blenheim. She was more than pleased however to arrive at her private place aboard our motor yacht. She would immediately be busy cleaning spider cobwebs from the flying bridge and cockpit.

As unfortunately always happens, the years marched on and Penny developed a problem with her kidney. Eventually the veterinary clinic could no longer



maintain her health and we finally carried our beloved cat to the vet to give her an injection and thus prevent her suffering any longer. Our good friend Chris

MacCallum built her a beautiful little coffin and we buried her beneath a Daphne bush on the grounds of Herbert Gardens.

Jill maintained that we had to replace Penny as soon as possible with another cat and looked for an established breeder in the Sounds area. We knew that the new cat could never take the place of Penny but selected an appropriate name in anticipation. After Penny it just had to be Tuppence and eventually came Minky.

## 1969 GRAND TOUR

Our tour in 1969 was different. First we made sure that we would be in the northern hemisphere during the summer and secondly we wanted to inspect different places. As usual we started the trip with a visit to Sydney so that I could see our children and then to Taiwan to arrange onwards flights. Next we headed for the Indian sub continent for a visit to New Delhi.

We left our New Delhi hotel by taxi to the airport on 4<sup>th</sup> July 1969. We flew by Indian Airways via Amritsar to Srinagar airport in Nepal arriving at two thirty in the afternoon. Jill had acquired what was euphemistically called *Delhi Belly*. This was decidedly inconvenient during the flight as there were others trying to use the chocked up tiny lavatory. We were the only foreigners on this flight.

When we arrived the contingent of long white robed hotel staff took one look at Jill's face and declared, "Memsahib need rest, poached fish and jelly." We followed orders and Jill was soon cured.

I had reserved a houseboat and the following morning we glided over the lake, propelled by long poles pushed into the muddy bottom. In the afternoon we took a tour by taxi through the city. Jill spied a fur and pelts shop in the bazaar and after much haggling we bought Jill a very beautiful fur coat that, for the rest of our trip and several years, became an important item of her clothing.

Time was marching on and on 11<sup>th</sup> July we emplaned again, same airline but this time with a Caravel aircraft and flew back to New Delhi. From there we left on 13<sup>th</sup> July via the Royal Nepalese Airline on a Fokker 27 aircraft for Kathmandu. This was another new experience. The airport was at a high altitude, the air pressure low and the runway short. Immediately after landing there was an almighty bang being the noise of the opening of the "drag shoot", which was used to slow down the plane once the wheels touched the ground.

A lengthy taxi ride took us to the hotel. Even our reserved "luxury room" was only a pathetic semblance of our normal hotel accommodation. Admittedly, in the late sixties, there were very few tourists and little trade with Nepal. Since we had come only to view the famous carved erotic figures of the public buildings and to observe bloody sacrifices of living animals, we were not considered important visitors. All in all we were very disappointed with our stay in Nepal. A few goats and cockerels had their throats cut and there were few

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erotic figurines that could teach us something. The highlight of our visit to Kathmandu was when we went to an observation point along the town's reservoir to view the rising of the moon. It certainly was one of the great moments to watch. At this altitude the clear air made the golden orb of the moon brilliant and appear enormous as it rose out of the water of the reservoir's dam

We left on the 16<sup>th</sup> on Thai Airways from Calcutta (now named Kol Kata) via Bangkok to Singapore. After some time with the Tan family we flew on the 24<sup>th</sup> to Djakarta on a Garuda DC-8. I celebrated my 59<sup>th</sup> crossing of the equator.

A number of political changes had taken place in Indonesia. Jill and I had visited there in 1967 and stayed in the new Hotel Indonesia. Taxis were plentiful, foreigners were allowed to gamble in selected casinos and beach hotels were being built for the expected influx of foreigners.

In 1969 one of our new enterprises in Taiwan required human hair for wigs and Jill and I accompanied my brother to Djakarta to negotiate the supply of hair to Taiwan. We flew in from Singapore on 24th July 1969 and stayed until 12th August, when we continued on to Sydney. On this trip we relaxed a lot in the mornings. After a few perfunctory visits to human hair peddlers, we would get into our bathing togs and stretch out along the hotel pool, trying to acquire a good suntan. Every hour we took a dip in the lukewarm water to cool off, and braced ourselves for the midday meal in the air conditioned dining room. The lunch menu always included a typical Dutch *Rijsttafel* consisting of plain white or brown rice with dozens of different savory dishes and condiments, ranging from mild masala powder to the spiciest *Samba Oele*, made from fresh hot chilies.

The last visit to Indonesia for Jill and I was a pleasure trip. Our friends, Dick and Rhoda Potton had accompanied us to Taipei and Hong Kong and on the way back to New Zealand we decided to stop over on Bali and flew to Denpasar on 13th April 1974. We stayed for a week, leaving on a Qantas flight on the twentieth.

We did not leave Djakarta until August 12<sup>th</sup> on a Lufthansa 707 for Sydney, my 41<sup>st</sup> visit to that city.

## COLUMBIA

I often scanned the boating trade magazines and hoped for a modern cruiser to appear for sale. One day I saw a picture of a small ship that looked like my type of vessel. She was called *Kahurangi II* and was lying at a private mooring in the Pauatahanui inlet near Paremata. The advertised specification included a telephone number and invitation to inspect. I phoned and was told the asking price that was well within my thinking. After years of negotiations I had learned to act spontaneously when a situation so demanded.

The seller was Howard Smith (Bill) and I made the appointment to inspect *Kahurangi* and to be taken for a test run the following day. The little ship was all that I had hoped. The outsides were immaculately finished while the interior had mostly temporary fittings. The engine showed less than twenty hours on its meter and when the boat was taken to its maximum speed it sounded sweet and the exhaust was clean.

Subject to the normal inspection and survey results I was ready to sign a purchase agreement and handed Bill a check for one thousand dollars to secure the boat. My lawyer Richard A. Heron was instructed to deal with all legal matters and in due course a contract was signed.



Once *Kahurangi's* new ownership was established, I immediately proceeded to rename the vessel. The boat was named after a geographic feature on the South Island's west coast. Being an American I wanted to give the vessel a distinctive American flavor without upsetting my New Zealand friends. There were two reasons why I selected the name *COLUMBIA*. Firstly Columbia is the dictionary word meaning America and secondly, just two months previously, on 20 July 1969 Neil Armstrong landed Columbia on the moon. My *COLUMBIA* became a respected name for many years, not forgetting her feat in circumnavigating New Zealand twice in opposite directions.

Columbia was far bigger than Boomerang and a capable small ship. Her dimensions were length 13.7 metres, beam 4.27 meters and draft 1.4 meters. The underwater sections were a gull wing moderate vee planing hull and the engine a GM V-8/53 diesel driving through a 2:1 reduction box a 21x30 propeller. I very soon had the interior work finished. That involved completing the aft cabin that Jill and I used, new access to the engine room and paneling to cover the back of the instruments. Additional water tanks were added and as

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time went by Columbia slowly settled into the water with the weight of gear. Full details of the vessel and our substantial cruises about New Zealand are contained in my books *Columbia Cruises South* and *Columbia Cruises North*.

As in New York I decided that I should satisfy whatever local requirements there were to skipper a boat. To my surprise I found that there were no mandatory requirements unless you were taking paying passengers. I had no intention of doing that but felt that the course for such certification would give me valuable knowledge. The navigation school was in The Tomato House, the old annex to the original parliament buildings. It got its name from the shape and size of the windows. I passed the Boatmaster, Yachtmaster Coastal and the Restricted Launch Limits courses without problems but there was a difficulty to award the latter. Evidence of time at sea with a qualified skipper was required. Captain Wearing was very strict in his interpretation of the regulations and I decided that the best thing to do was to sign on as a deck hand of one of the local fishing boats. Barry Turner had the nominal role of Harbor Master at Paremata as well as being a fisherman. For six months I went out with him to lay and retrieve crayfish pots about the South West coast of the North Island. It always seemed to involve leaving at very early hours so I would drive out to Mana in the afternoon and sleep aboard Columbia. At 0400 Barry would bring his boat alongside and we would set out to sea. The work was heavy as the pots were mostly made of steel, covered with wire netting. There was a winch to lift them out of the water but they always needed man handling around the deck. Despite the plentiful supply of crayfish that I was given, I was not sorry to leave when I had accumulated sufficient sea time. Usually we were back in the harbor by 1100 and after a shower at the clubhouse I would return home or stay aboard ready for the morning.

My best man, former All Black Ron Jarden, was a stockbroker and counted the Nelson entrepreneur and industrialist Richard H. Potton (Dick) among his clients. One day, while Ron was aboard Dick's little ship the *Kudu*, we passed each other, stopped, and introductions were made. Dick maintained a private floating jetty in the Nelson boat harbor with his own fuelling facility. *KUDU* was a 62 foot twin-screw motor yacht driven by two Rolls Royce engines.

When we visited Nelson, Dick invited us to use his momentarily empty second jetty to stay over night, offering the plug in electricity facilities, water and fuel. His wife Rhoda came down and invited us to have dinner at their home "on-the-hill". Dick drove the latest model Rolls Royce car and we often kidded Dick that together with the boat engines he had three Rolls Royce's. Rhoda was relegated to one of the newest model Jaguar cars.

Dick had earlier developed a new type of water heater and formed a company he named *ZIP Industries*. With people clamoring for this type of heater his company was enormously successful and after several years he sold *ZIP* to an Australian gold mining company. Dick then bought some undeveloped property on the ridge in Nelson overlooking Tasman Bay and built a magnificent home, surrounded by lawns, gardens, an indoor-outdoor swimming pool and a multi car garage.

A very close friendship developed between us two and we cruised together for several years. Dick was handicapped with a paralyzed left arm, the result of the infantile paralysis outbreak in New Zealand during 1954. Rhoda was a virtual angel and in every way supported Dick in his difficulties. To assist in boat handling Dick had made arrangements with one of Nelson's fishermen, Thomas Fidelis Scannell King-Turner to accompany him on all cruises. The King Turners were a fishing family known through the South Island and could be guaranteed to always find the best fishing spots.

Because of his handicap Dick preferred to cruise within a limited distance from Nelson and his doctors. Thus he preferred the Marlborough Sounds. To my benefit, accompanying *Kudu* was a wonderful learning experience. In particular, once *Kudu* had dropped anchor, I would simply tie alongside. An added advantage was the permission to snake a 230 Volt line to her generator in the engine room and wallow in "shore power". The two extension cords were only loosely plugged together in case of a sudden surge but there was never an emergency.

Mutual convenience and enjoying each other's company finally resulted in an agreement to plan a joint cruise to Stewart Island. Due to his handicap Dick would be accompanied by Tom and Trevor Harvey, an old time trusted employee and great outdoors man. On Columbia we would have the company of Tom's older brother, Abbie King Turner, also a former fisherman and experienced motor mechanic. The cruise was an unqualified success and resulted in my publishing *Columbia Cruises South*, the first of two books describing my circumnavigation of New Zealand.

Cruising together was not the only joint traveling we did. In the seventies we flew together to Taiwan and spent time together in Hong Kong and Bali. Rhoda, ever watchful over Dick, should have been more concerned with her own health. On 22 August 1991 she succumbed to cancer and quietly passed away at Manuka Street Hospital. Jill and I flew to Nelson to be with Dick, his two sons, Richard and Craig, their wives and grandchildren.

Jill and I regularly attended Dick's birthday parties and either drove from Havelock over the mountains to Nelson or flew direct from Wellington. My own handicap has prevented me from celebrating with Dick in recent years. Fortunately Dick became attached to a wonderful lady, Elsbeth Kennedy, formerly a director of Ron Jarden's brokerage firm in Wellington. In their advanced years they give each other solace from loneliness.

Originally Columbia had a powerful winch with a very small diameter drum. This made it very slow to retrieve the anchor. Nalder and Biddle made and installed a shell to increase the diameter of the drum. This was very satisfactory but still required one of us to be on the foredeck so as to manually wrap the anchor rope at least twice around the drum. After many years I decided to replace the rope with a chain and the 'shell' with a capstan. This was a great improvement when anchoring and allowed later the installation of remote control from the wheelhouse. I was able to be dial in the required scope



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and that would be released. It then only required the anchor to be 'dragged in' and resulted in secure holding in every case over the next few years.

Changes to the flying bridge developed slowly. There was always a steering position on both the flying bridge and the wheelhouse. When the weather was fine we used the flying bridge. We added adequate facilities for holding glasses, cans and bottles and made control of Columbia an outright pleasure. The first major change to the bridge was the installation of windshield across the beam of the vessel. That allowed up to five people to be fully protected against spray and wind. To give further improved visibility, I had a raised 'captain's' chair installed, which also acted as base for a sunshade covering the visitors riding 'above'. For a while we had a movable sunshade that could extend over the entire length from the bridge to the cockpit. This proved too much effort to erect and was later discarded.

Originally our dinghy was stored athwartships on the aft deck. I always required its oars and small anchor to be tied inside the stowed dinghy. Once we acquired a small 6 HP outboard the storage athwartships became too cumbersome. After full discussions with the boat builders it was agreed that the permanent installation of two davits on the rear of the cockpit could carry the dinghy, outboard, fuel, plus one person in safety. From then on the dinghy plus contents was simply hoisted into the davits and allowed launching our



*Columbiette* in great style with least difficulty.

Columbia was one of the first boats of the Mana Cruising Club to have radar installed. I had previously graduated from the maritime school of the Ministry of Transport and received a telephone from Captain Williams of the marine school offering me a place in a course on radar use.

"Thank you," I responded. "Why would I need that?"

"Well you have a radar on your ship and to be honest we have started a

new course, have two sea captains that want the certificate but really need a minimum of three pupils,” Captain Williams replied.

I accepted the offer and very much enjoyed the course and the company of the two sea captains. They assured me that if Captain Williams said I should do something then it was best to obey. Just before one of the lunchtime breaks Captain Williams announced that instead of getting fat and eating at lunchtime we should each use the simulator and practice taking a small ship along a coastline with which we were familiar. I chose to take a 300 tonne vessel south from Kapiti Island inside Mana Island and then to Ohau Point. The exercise at first went well. I left Mana to starboard and then adjusted the course to veer to starboard to round the southern end. The track remorselessly continued due south over the land and nothing I did made any difference. I heard laughter and then the lights came on to reveal the members of the navigation school that had been watching. Unbeknown to me the 300 tonne coastal vessel had been switched to a 300,000 tonne supertanker that took many miles to turn and stop.

After a strenuous week of classes and practical work with full-scale equipment I passed the required exam and was duly issued with the second New Zealand Ministry of Transport Radar License.

Being the first radar user in the Club I was happy to act as the lead boat on several Cook Strait crossings. One return trip from the Sounds to Paremata was particularly memorable. A group of us had had been in Tawa Bay in Outer Queen Charlotte Sound, when suddenly fog developed. It was the end of a weekend and we all were anxious to return home. Columbia took the lead and guided only by the radarscope's green picture, threaded our way in total darkness out of the bay. We passed the entrance, The Brothers, crossed the Straits in luckily calm weather, with each boat following the other, guided only by *COLUMBIA'S* radar system. The silly fact that I had a license made me so completely confident, that 'I homed in' on Mana Island and our Club's ultimate destination without a second thought of the possible danger of a floating container. Luckily all returned safely home. Indeed a memorable crossing.

Through the years we had many friends and casual visitors aboard. In the early days we welcomed the American Ambassador Ken Franzheim and his wife Barbara aboard for a trip through the Queen Charlotte Sounds. We had taken Columbia to Picton and the Embassy chauffeur carried several baskets of food and liquor including bottles of vodka and Kalua to make Black Russians. It was 14 January 1970 and the following day would be the two hundred year anniversary of Lieutenant James Cook's first anchorage in Ship Cove. Ken hoped to follow in his footsteps on the same days as the historic voyage of discovery.

We had offered the Franzheim's our cabin and once aboard Ken had 'flaked out' and was lying in my bunk when Barbara called us over. When we peeked Penny (our cat) had made herself at home on Ken's chest and was sound asleep.

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We dropped anchor in Ship's Cove, beneath the large white monument reminding us of the Cook's voyages and had a peaceful night. Jill and Barbara kept themselves busy in the galley while Ken felt obliged to act as steward and poured endless pitchers of Black Russians to accompany the many types of "delicatessen" they had brought along. After a day of sightseeing we cruised to nearby Tawa Bay and anchored for another quiet night. The next morning, missing his daily shower, Ken dived overboard and swam to the shore and back. Jill waited for him on the stern platform with a bucket of warm fresh water to rinse off the salt.

In the morning we cruised out of Queen Charlotte Sound and headed into the Cook Strait. Before leaving I wanted to dispose of the several empty bottles. This was before the days of recycling glass and it always seemed hard to find a place to put empty bottles. I told our friends that they could now observe a small ceremony. We carried on board a "gedonker" to keep track of crossings. It consisted of a heavy brass rod, about 40 cm in length with a wooden round knob at one end. One inserted the rod into the bottle and gave it a good push. **Gedonk** and the bottom would fall out of the bottle, which was then jettisoned and sank. I filed a notch into the rod every time we crossed the Straights and now performed my filing for the guests.

The weather was with us and we crossed without any problem to Mana Island and into the Paremata Harbour. We pulled alongside the Mana Cruising Club's jetty in the early afternoon. The ambassadorial black Cadillac car with the diplomatic licence plate DP-50 had in the meantime returned by ferry to Wellington and the chauffeur was waiting when *Columbia* docked.



A close friendship had developed with the Franzheim's and we spent a lot of time together in Wellington over the next two years. One day Barbara had a fall off her horse and broke her pelvis. Jill spent much time with Barbara in her bedroom when her recuperation became rather tedious and she needed company.

Another personality worth bragging about was the English television and movie star Jon Pertwee of *Worzel Gummidge*, *Navy Lark* and *Dr. Who's* fame. He was married to Inga who came from Germany and we celebrated her birthday while aboard

What a great photographic opportunity it turned out to be for us, with Jon swimming off the stern and then tempting Penny with smoked eel. In the photograph Jill is cuddling Penny while Inga helped in the galley.

As a Life Member I felt obligated to attend the Royal Port Nicholson's annual club openings whenever possible. Allan Martin as the president and his wife Shirley always performed various functions jointly with whatever illustrious personality had been cornered to fire the starting gun or "break out" the club's burgee at the masthead. The Martin's Opening Day luncheon was always a special occasion, preferably held in the club's own restaurant operated then by Martin Bosley. It was a much sought after affair.

### **NEW YORK and TAHITI**

In the northern summer of 1970 I made my second attendance at the America's Cup series. Jill and I, accompanied by her girlfriend Marilyn, drove from Greenwich to Rhode Island to attend the race of the Australian *Grete/ II* against the American *Interpid*. We stayed over night at the new Holiday Inn hotel and the next morning were picked up by a car to take us to the gang plank of a beautiful cruising yacht, the personal flag ship of the Farrell Lines owner. Mr. Farrell who, we had been told, was to be addressed as Commodore, arrived shortly thereafter in his limousine and was rolled aboard his motor yacht in a wheelchair. We were first directed to one cabin where an appropriate number of *Sperry Dockside* boat shoes and binoculars were distributed to every one of the guests together with coffee, danish and donuts. We soon were under way in miserable weather conditions and the motor yacht took the position as directed by the race committee.

We were told that during the race we were to be served lunch and all milled around table that had been set up perfectly buffet style. Before any one could start to eat the roll of the ship suddenly increased and instantly all food and dishes were flung off the anchored-down table. Unfortunately the cabinet that held all the liquor was not, and the next large wave sent it lurching forward. The Australian Ambassador flew to its aid with the resounding phrase "save the grog" and all came to the rescue.

Assured that the weather would abate and allow the race to start, the little ship again took position and continued to roll in the most uncomfortable conditions. Meanwhile the crew laid the table for a second time and we hoped for sumptuous buffet meal.

The race started and after a few minutes of miserable cruising another large wave slewed the motor yacht. The food once again found itself on the dining room's carpeted floor, amidst broken china and glass. The race was eventually called off and we all made do with quickly prepared sandwiches while the boat headed for port. There we returned our shoes and binoculars and returned to the unmoving land.

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On our way back to New Zealand from the United States we went to Mexico. We flew down to Acapulco from St. Louis via Oklahoma City and Dallas. We stopped for three days to enjoy the tourist things and visited the Acapulco Club de Yates. We went on the highly touted Tropical Tour on the *Fiesta*, watching the high divers vault from the edge of a cliff into the swirling waters beneath. They timed their jumps with the inflow of waves over the rocks below. We admired the Para gliders fly high above Acapulco Bay past our hotel window to finally land in the arms of the beach boys without getting their feet wet. We tried various highly spiced Mexican foods and sucked on a lemon slice, licking the salt off the joint between the thumb and index fingers after swallowing a good-sized shot of Tequila.

We were unexpectedly treated to two additional days due to an aircraft problem. When we arrived in Tahiti on 9 August 1970 at Faa airport, Qantas Airways had arranged reservations for us at the Maeve Beach Hotel, which was about eight kilometers west of the airport. After passing through customs, a tiny rental car was waiting for us and we enjoyed the short drive to the hotel. We had visited Papeete previously and had little trouble becoming used to the leisurely way of driving after the hectic weeks of traffic in the USA. As usual Jill had the wheel and I held a local map on my lap, trying to work out the odd one-way system in the small city.

With ample time on our hands we drove to the Papeete Yacht Club at Arue, about three kilometers out of town. The PYC is an affiliate of our club in Wellington and we were once again granted visitor's privileges. The club always seemed to be in the process of being enlarged and we enjoyed the French Polynesian mixture and happy yachting atmosphere that prevails at PYC.

Papeete is famous for the many overseas yachts that drop anchor along Quai Bir Hakeim, the main drag that is part of the ring road around 'big' and 'little' Tahiti, (Tahiti Nui and Tahiti Iti.) Over the years, life in Papeete changed considerably. In 1964 it was a quiet backwater and still very primitive. Since that first visit, it became a fairly modern town, designed for tourism and very much the center of France's district d'outre-mer', so vitally concerned with the nuclear tests at Mourea.

Food being very much our hobby, both cooking and eating, we were always on the lookout for top rated restaurants. We particularly enjoyed one evening at the La Belvedere restaurant, which we reached after an interesting drive up the side of the mountain at Fare Rau Ape. The view was fabulous, the drinks generously sized and the dishes ordered fully up to expectation. We even met a fellow yacht owner from California and thoroughly enjoyed that evening watching the night slowly approaching and romantically looking at the stars unspoiled by any electric lights of Papeete below. I was fully aware that tipping was not required in Tahiti but after the excellent meal felt that a tip was most appropriate. Having committed that crime I had to undergo a ten minute lecture from the proprietor that it was insulting to try and offer money for the service, which had been rendered with such willingness and pleasure. I never tried



again to tip in Tahiti.

Another highly recommended restaurant was Le Dragon d'Or, the Golden Dragon, and as the name suggests, a restaurant specializing in Chinese cuisine. Most establishments offer island musicians, or music of the atolls, or guaranteed non-stop music. We were looking for a quiet and intimate meal and found what we were after in the Golden Dragon.

The weather was perfect, just enough wind to keep us cool and we had promised ourselves that on this trip we would visit Moorea, one of the Outer Islands, fifteen kilometers west of Tahiti. Either plane or boat gave convenient and comfortable access. We decided to use the launch that started from Papeete's Tourist Board wharf on Quai Gallieni. *Keke II* was a twin diesel launch and in about one hour we arrived at our destination, the Bali-Hai Hotel, located inside a lagoon on the north side of the island. The first view of the mountains was quite breathtaking. Enormous peaks shooting up from the white sandy beaches. We had timed our arrival for a Sunday, which promised a scheduled feast (tamaaraa). That included Tahitian dancing and the ritual opening of the earth oven (ahimaa) containing the usual pork, taro roots, wild bananas all served on green leaves. The fact that this was no different from a standard New Zealand hangi did not distract from the fun that comes from being in a foreign country and watching exotic customs. Our hotel room was an individual garden bungalow with a thatched roof, but air-conditioned to minimize mosquitoes and other flying things.

Once back in Papeete we had to re-visit another well-known establishment. Quinn's was located on the Quai du Commerce across from the waterfront and within walking distance from the pier at which the overseas yachts were anchored. Advertising itself as the Happiest Night Club in the South Seas, it had a loud and brassy band and seemed to play non-stop music. Many of the tourists and visitors found the lovely Tahitian girls ready and willing dance partners. I would not recommend Quinn's as a place to enjoy an evening meal. We were told of plans to change the style and atmosphere of this famous open-air establishment and were glad that we still saw it 'as it used to be'.

We left Papeete on the 11<sup>th</sup> and flew to Nadi in Fiji in a DC-8 of the French UTA. We stayed two days and rented a car to drive to Suva. From there we went by Fijian Airways on a Hawker Sidley 74-B for the twenty-five minute hop back to Nadi. In the evening we caught the four hour Air New Zealand flight to Auckland.

## **ONCE MORE ROUND THE WORLD.**

In October 1971 I became the Treasurer of the Mana Cruising Club. I had offered my services at a higher level but club politics prevailed and I was happy to make an initial contribution at a lower level. I was happy to make my office available and employed Hilton Paul, later Jill's brother in law, to maintain the



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financial records. Over the next five years I rose to flag ranks and was the Commodore from October 1974 until October 1976. Involvement with the club took considerable time and meant that our oversease trips were brief.

It was not until July 1977, having made arrangements for our little cat, we embarked on yet another grand tour of Europe and the United States. We boarded the Air New Zealand flight to Sydney for a short visit and left on the 9<sup>th</sup> via Qantas to Hong Kong. Having time to enjoy our travel allowed us to make a short visit to Macau. We made arrangements to use the high speed Shun Tak Turbojet ferry. We stayed only one night in Macau and took in the sights of this former Portuguese colony. Once back in Hong Kong we concentrated on some serious shopping. Jill had established an acquaintance with a lady jeweler and she helped us select some very nice pieces. She also assisted Jill in finding clothing and accoutrements at 'local' prices. Staying as usual at the Peninsula Hotel had its advantages. Being in the middle of Kowloon, it was in easy walking distance to most of the fine, but more importantly, the recommended Chinese shops.

By my log numbering system it was my thirty eighth visit to that wonderful city and we stayed until the 14<sup>th</sup> when we left for Bombay via Bangkok. We flew by Swiss Air DC-10 and after one night at the *Taj Mahal* in Bombay continued via Air India to Cairo. There my travel arrangements failed. I had advised the local representative of Misr Rayonne S.A.E. of our arrival. That company was still owned by Henry and myself. Jill and I had passed in solitary splendor through customs and exited the airport with not a soul to receive us so we took a taxi to the *Semiramis Hotel*. There we found they had reservations for Baron and Baroness von Kohorn for the following day. The next morning *Saïd Bey* arrived with thousands of apologies. My message had not taken into consideration that we arrived exactly at midnight and he had expected us the following day. No harm done.

Jill and I were taken to an associate of our company who was an expert on the conversion of papyrus into paper. He gave us a chance to purchase some pictures made of papyrus, which now hang in our Queensland apartment.

We told ourselves that this was to be a holiday fun trip and since I had never visited tourist places, we intended to make reservations on the Nile Ferry to take us to the Aswan Dam.

"Sorry Sir, the Nile is too shallow at this time of the year. But we can offer you reservations on Egypt Air to fly via Aswan and Abu Simbel." We were strongly advised by Saïd Bey to fly. After admiring the damn Dam, we got back on a brand new Egypt Air 737 and flew down river to Abu Simbel, all of thirty-five minutes. Despite all of my cynicism I had to admit that the temples of Ramses and Nefertiti were unforgettable. The two temples had previously stood near the river but would have been submerged when the Aswan High Dam created Lake Nasser. The Egyptian Government, with financial support of the United Nations, dismantled the temples and put them back together again sixty meters higher.

Back in Cairo we first visited Banque Misr and then I contacted the widow of their former Chairman who was a close friend of my parents. She took us to the Maadi Yacht Club, knowing of my boating interest. We had already visited the Cairo Yacht Club, overlooking the Nile River and this one was more oriented to small craft. On this trip I made a point of visiting as many yacht clubs as possible with Jill becoming increasingly bored.

Our next major stop was Belgrade in Yugoslavia and required a change of planes and two nights in Istanbul. We left Cairo on a Bulgarian Airline Tupolev 154 for the short hop of one and a half hours. The pilot must have been a Bulgarian Airforce ace. We had hardly rolled down the runway when he went full throttle standing the plane on its tail and shot straight up into the air. The 'cabin crew' reminded me of my flights to Russia in the late nineteen fifties. Our first class seats were a joke. We were the only ones in the 'luxury cabin' and were offered warm Bulgarian Sekt and sliced salami. We did however arrive safely and deplaned in Istanbul at five in the morning.

We hired a taxi and I directed the driver to take us to the Hilton Hotel where I had stayed on a previous visit. I had two people I wanted to meet. The first was my counterpart, the chair of the Fulbright Foundation of Turkey. I contacted him by telephone and learned that he was also a past commodore of the Turkish Yacht Club. We met and I was delighted to talk education and yachting.

Our onward reservation was two days later on a Yugoslav Airline Boeing 727 that left at 8 am to go to Istanbul. I was amazed that a communist country had an American airplane and that it was a jet. We arrived in Belgrade (now Beograd) at seven thirty a.m., thanks to the two hours time difference. I could not possibly stay anywhere else but at the *Majestic Hotel* having lived there for several weeks during my negotiations with the Yugoslav Government for our development of the Yugoslav rayon industry. I had my address book and tried to contact several of my former negotiators and factory staff members. None were still alive, not for political reasons, but because of age.

We had intended to take the Danube steamer to Budapest. Once more our timing was wrong. It was mid summer and the Danube River was at an extremely low level. We struggled with our luggage to the railroad station and bought tickets for the seven hour train ride to Budapest. There were a lot of suitcases and in this communist country there were no porters even for first class passengers. The compartment was comfortable and gave us a relaxed view of the Danube plain. In the fields were sunflowers and kukeruts (maize). At the border with Hungary guards came through the carriages to inspect and stamp passports.

We spent four days in Budapest. I had contacted the representative of the Hungarian Sports Organization and invited him to have breakfast with us at the Hilton where we were staying. He was helpful and suggested we spend an afternoon at the famous dog races. It was another ho hum time spent. That evening we went to the most highly recommended pan-fried goose liver

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restaurant in Hungary. Jill had been clamoring for 'real' goose liver and now she had the opportunity at the fountainhead of Goose Liver production.

The restaurant, called *Gambrinus* was supposedly over three hundred years old, but, what Hungarians call *sült libamásjszelet*, was truly superb. Surprisingly we did not have any gulyas (goulash) while in Budapest.

We left Budapest on August 2<sup>nd</sup> and took the bus to Vienna. This was again supposed to have been a boat trip but the Danube River was in flood. We arrived at ten minutes past one in the afternoon. Vienna was where we rented an Avis car to use for the rest of our European tour. As with all our trips to Europe we visited various relatives and old friends over the next three weeks. We left Europe from Zeebrugge on 23 of August and flew to London for a week to visit the company offices that our family had retained.

From London we went directly to New York and stayed there for a month to visit my brother and his family in Greenwich CT. We borrowed one of Henry's cars and went to a local car dealer and bought ourselves a Lincoln Continental to use for the next part of our tour.

We drove on the turnpike north to Albany, the state capitol of New York, and then decided to visit the Canadian version of Picton. Like the town in the Marlborough Sounds in New Zealand this village was at the head of an arm of Lake Ontario. It was quite a distance to drive and we stayed in Picton for the night before going on to Toronto to visit Jill's brother who owned a dojo (Japanese exercise center).

A day or so later we set off to the west and eventually arrived at Salt Lake City in Utah. The Lincoln had proved to be very comfortable on the journey but we felt that we needed to do proper speed test. On the Bonneville Salt Flats the speedometer read 150 miles per hour. The actual speed may have been some where near that. After the exhilarating dash, the locals advised us to be sure that we had the underside of the car cleaned, as the salt would be highly corrosive.

Eventually we drove to San Pedro the port of Los Angeles where I gave the foreman \$20 to look after the car. It went into a container and was shipped to Auckland without the slightest damage while we flew. In Auckland it was unloaded and steam cleaned (that is still part of the countries agriculture safeguards) and we then drove it to Wellington. It had been a great holiday.



## INTERNATIONAL ORDER OF THE BLUE GAVEL

Two years later we had a different trip. It was not as lengthy or with as much travel but it did give rise to another happy occupation. This time Jill and I flew to Los Angeles and bought a Ford Mercury car. We drove north up the west coast and, as arranged, at Portland met Barrie Windle who had arrived by plane from New Zealand. With him we drove onwards to Seattle. I had decided to call in at various yacht clubs and was pleased to meet several Past Commodores at the Seattle yacht club. I learned from them that there was an organization of Past Commodores of which Wesley Ortnier was the President. They told me that I had to call in at Spokane to meet others who belonged to the organization. When I mentioned that I would be going to Cleveland Ohio they insisted I visit the yacht club there.

Perhaps to Jill's boredom I followed their advice and we called at the yacht club in Spokane to a great welcome. The club was based on the Columbia River. We then headed to Cleveland stopping in Yellowstone Park and Chicago and other places. We spent one night in Yellowstone Park as Jill declared there were plenty of mud pools and geysers to see in New Zealand. It was very cold overnight and when we went to the car in the morning the windscreen was covered with ice that I scraped off with a credit card. The only other stop I remember was in Chicago. We visited the then new Renaissance complex and visited the bar on the top floor.

Finally we arrived in Cleveland, Ohio. My initial reason to visit this city was because of the Nylong factory that we had established in the nineteen forties. The plant had not changed much, there was still a lot of hand labour and it all seemed very Dickensian.

I could hardly wait to call on the Cleveland Yacht Club. Showing my Royal Port Nicholson Life Membership card I explained that I was also a past commodore of the Mana Cruising Club. I was introduced to Fred Roth, the past commodore of the Cleveland club. He then explained that he was the incumbent president of the ***International Order of the Blue Gavel (IOBG)***.

IOBG was an organization founded several years previously in Portland, Oregon then presided over by Wesley Ortnier. The rules limited membership to past commodores of well-established yacht clubs with a minimum number of members. Fred suggested that I should study the rules of his organization and make a determination whether a New Zealand branch or chapter was feasible.

By the time I was ready to leave Cleveland for the East Coast, three days later, Fred Roth and I had established a close rapport and I was determined to see the creation of a New Zealand Blue Gavel organization. On arriving in Connecticut we stayed at my brother's residence in Greenwich and having been issued with an IOBG membership card in Cleveland I visited local yacht clubs, enjoying clubhouse membership privileges and their bar and dining room facilities.

This convinced me of the value of belonging to the past commodore organization, and I decided to undertake the onerous task of creating a New

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Zealand chapter. Back home in Wellington I established a legally constituted organization by signing up the required minimum number of signatories, from different Wellington area yachting organizations, later expanded to other areas.

The Founding members consisted of past commodores of Royal Port Nicholson, Evans Bay, Worser Bay, Parameta, Plimmerton and Mana clubs. A lawyer, who was a former commodore, was found and persuaded to attend to the legal formalities at no cost to the burgeoning organization. I contacted the London based Yacht Club Register and won them over to include them in the listing of the National Blue Gavel Organization with a color reproduction of the IOBG association emblem in future issues.

The New Zealand Blue Gavel district grew rapidly and before long we counted over three hundred members. I established eight districts each with its own directors, persuaded the retired Admiral Sir Gordon Tait, KCB, DSC of the Royal Yacht *Britania* to accept World Patronage and with my permanent office in Wellington acted as a center for the creation of districts in Australia, Singapore, the Marshall Islands and Rarotonga. Later I traveled to the United Kingdom, Mexico and Hawaii creating further districts. I attended several Annual General Meetings of the parent organization in the USA and even persuaded them to hold one of their annual events offshore in New Zealand, and in 1988 in Hawaii. For my efforts I was appointed the International Vice President and ultimately a Life Member of the world organization.

I always tried to attend national annual IOBG meetings wherever they were held and enjoyed the fraternal fellowship with other commodores in Seattle, San Diego, Palm Beach, Honolulu, Wellington and London. The Annual meeting held in San Diego in nineteen eighty-eight included for the first time the presidents of overseas Blue Gavel organizations from the UK, Mexico and New Zealand.

My New Zealand District annual meetings were held in Taupo, Bucklands Beach, Picton, Akaroa, Christchurch, Nelson, Wellington and once in Hawaii. I donated my office on the Terrace to look after the New Zealand members. We were kept busy with the many arrangements for the local membership and the endless correspondence with the parent organization in the USA. Finally, an accountant was elected and the lengthy annual collection of club dues and issue of membership cards placed into professional hands.

After several years as New Zealand District President I resigned but was immediately elected to Patron of the N.Z. District. I resigned when my attendance at the Annual Meetings was no longer possible because of my semi annual residence in Queensland.





## SWAMPING THE VICE REGAL COUPLE

We had been invited several times to the Egyptian Embassy and had hosted Ihab and Fifi Sarour to our home. Their daughter Noab had been enrolled in Jill's Academy and had been awarded her class's "Gold Rose". We wanted to give our friends special thanks and invited Ihab to spend a weekend on *Columbia*. When he saw our radio he asked whether he could make a phone call to Cairo. Jill, our "radio operator" was happy to oblige and contacted in the first instance Wellington Radio for an overseas connection. Wellington contacted Egypt Telephone, we kept on sending, they kept on sending and nothing happened. Everybody gave up after thirty minutes. We sat down for a quiet meal and among the condiments was a container of artificial bacon aboard that Jill tried to persuade Ihab to try. It was guaranteed free of pork and only smelled of pork, she said. Being a Muslim, Ihab refused to take a chance of being contaminated with pork.

One of our favorite anchorages near Mana was a small island lying offshore of Kapiti Island called Fisherman's Island. The island had been occupied in the eighteen hundreds by the great Maori warrior Te Raparaha. It was now occupied by one of his grandsons, Jack Webber. We had become friendly with him and his brother Jim, the writer of the automotive column in the Wellington newspaper. Jack had invited us to his shack on the Motungarara Island where he lived with a young girl. He regularly got into trouble with the police and I appeared once in court as a character witness, testifying that he was a 'decent' person. For many months he had shown his appreciation to me by giving me a fat fish every time we approached "his" island. Later we lost contact when he was taken to jail for a longer period.



At another occasion we were cruising in the Tasman Bay and had invited David (the Governor General which is the Queen's representative in New Zealand) and Norma Beattie aboard for dinner. The Beatties were staying in a vacation home at Torrent Bay beach and commuted

during the holidays by helicopter from the Vice Regal residence in Wellington.

David had been president of the New Zealand Sports Foundation, a friend of ours, and visited our Wellington home several times before being appointed the Governor General.

As the meal progressed the wind increased. By the time we had finished our meal the wind was robust and there were waves crashing onto the beach. I launched our dinghy and got David, an ex naval officer ashore without trouble. I then returned to *Columbia* for Norma and she climbed safely into *Columbiette*. I started the outboard and we surfed towards the beach. Then a large wave swamped our dinghy and Her Excellency was thoroughly drenched. After running aground on the beach I tried vainly to turn the dinghy around to return to *Columbia* and in the process was knocked over. Norma, a former nurse, without any hesitation, picked me up bodily out of the receding flood water, pushed the dinghy with me in it into deeper water and laughingly waved a hearty good luck to me while I struggled to start the outboard. Wet and totally bedraggled I finally got back aboard our little ship and spent the following day apologizing to Norma for this Vice-Regal misadventure.

## KAREN AND STEVEN

Around Christmas time in 1984, Diana arranged for Karen to visit her aunt Judith Ann in Victoria. Judy had married again after the death of her husband Derek Holyman. This time she married a young architect. They established a vineyard and were pleased to have Karen stay for the holidays. Judy's new husband William Cope Williams was a New Zealander and had been divorced. He had invited his younger brother, Robert, also divorced, to come and stay for the holidays.

Robert Cope Williams was the producer and announcer of the Farming Program of the station *Radio Caroline* in Timaru. New Zealand. Karen and Robert hit it off and decided to be married. Diana was pleased with this outcome and offered to have the wedding reception at her home at 8 Wentworth Avenue in the Sydney suburb of Vaucluse. The wedding on 8 January 1986 was made into a splendid affair. The ceremony was held at the chapel of Karen's former Anglican School, (St. Catherine's at Edgecliff) in Sydney.

I had the pleasure of walking my daughter down the aisle and at the evening dinner met family and many friends of my ex wife, who had by that time also remarried. Her new husband was John Richardson. He was previously divorced, a lawyer and a former state senator of Victoria. Divorces came easily in the family. In between, in 1968, Diana had quickly married Peter Morris, but just as quickly divorced him.

All family members and some guests had been offered rooms at a convenient nearby hotel. The temperature on the wedding day never dropped below twenty-six degrees Celsius and unfortunately the hotel was not air-conditioned. The moment we woke up the next morning we hightailed it out of the suburbs

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and checked in at the lovely, air conditioned mid city Sydney Hilton.

Karen and Robert lived in Timaru and we assisted when they decided to buy a house in a staid neighborhood. A family was soon started. First came daughter, Jacqueline in September 1987, then son Marcus in 1989 and son Piers in 1992. Robert, a racing car buff, persuaded Karen to name their second son after the famous driver.

Jill and I did the right thing and flew each time to Christchurch to attend the grand children's christening. They were held at St. Barnabas Church in Fendalton.

Such pleasures did not come to my son christened Kirk Steven, and insists being called Steven. After graduating from Scots College in Melbourne and Geelong Grammar School he entered the University of New South Wales to study law. A job with his stepfather's law firm was practically assured. After only one year Steve decided that studies at Sydney University would be less



demanding. After a further six months he gave up law studies and entered business life involving numerous undertakings. At one stage he traded and dealt in gold coins, in another he attempted to sell mechanical units that were to purify air in closed cars by means of electrolysis. Always an innovator and with a strong bent for advertising he found his niche when he started to work for an organization named *ENERGI.MEDIA*. There he had a financial interest and became Managing Director of Channel 12 and *Cabvertising* in Sydney and

Melbourne.

He met and instantly fell madly in love with a young woman called Anna. She was very young, truly pretty with a Madonna like beauty and she had a job. After the marriage Steven learned that the job was manageress of a massage establishment and that Anna had a child. Anna Pedersen, of blond Norwegian parentage claimed that her job required her presence during night hours. It then transpired that Anna was not only a manageress. Fortunately a separation was quickly arranged.

Later Steven met another young lady, Annette Josephine Hartnett that had been born in England in 1958. They were married on fifth of May in 1989. Jill and I were present at the wedding as was Steven's mother Diana and Robert the husband of Karen. Annette's job was managing the Sydney office of the Drake employment organization. She also had great interests in cooking and later graduated from the Australian branch of the world famous Cordon Bleu Cooking School.

## GENEALOGY

Shortly after my arrival in New York in 1941 one of my Dad's acquaintances mentioned that he had seen the name General von Cohorn in a biography. Dad's had his office at 501 Fifth Avenue was across the street from the New York Public Library. I sometimes went there to take a look at the information desk and went to investigate the General. To my great surprise I found a Dutch general spelled *van Coehorn*. It was many years before I was to investigate this further. After the end of the second world war I started saving any information about the family name.

Other research included the family coats of arms and all armorials identification. The research enabled me to chart a family tree, write a short history of my research and the methodology of collecting Cohorn/Kohorn in Germany, Holland, France and Scandinavia.

This research automatically extended from the spellings Cohorn and Kohorn. In France under Cohorne, in Germany under Kuhorn and Kühorn, in Friesland under Coehoorn and other minor variations.

In the mid nineteen eighties I decided that I would compile a family tree. I joined the New Zealand Genalogical Society and they directed me towards a computer programme and sources of information. I found it very helpful to use the Mormon Church's genealogical computer program. I had first visited the 'stake' (library) in Upper Hutt and in Wellington and learned the proper use of the material available in the local branches. Their system called *Soundex* enabled me to create a list of 28 variations of the names Cohorn or Kohorn. Dutch, French, Scandinavians, Latins and Italians, all had pronunciation and spelling variations. In the past two or three centuries, when my ancestors found

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it necessary to have their names recorded, the scribes quite often wrote the names as they heard it, but not necessarily as it should have been spelled.

Wanting to reduce the need for my continuous request for assistance, I decided to travel to the font of all Mormon information located in Salt Lake City in Utah. While Jill and I were on our way across the United States we pulled into Salt Lake City and found ourselves a room in the local downtown Holiday Inn. Jill took several city tours while I visited the genealogical center and investigated family data. I also studied the methodology of the computer system known as PAF (Personal Ancestral Files).

At the Mormon center general data was easy to obtain and I only needed to sign in and after being shown the local system was left to my own devices. I copied many dozens of names onto a disk all for free and only had to pay a paltry ten cents per copy to print out the collected data.

There was a safeguard for data of aristocratic families and ruling houses, which for a reason know only to the Mormons, was maintained in a separate building. I trotted there with my laptop and several folders and requested to view a number of annual listings of the register of German barons. Only after identifying myself was I given access to the register. Unfortunately there was nothing that I had not already known.

It was not until 1987 that I collated the data and in June published the first volume of a book called *The Cohorn Clan*. It contained 49 bibliographic references from several European sources as well as more than twenty copies of family portraits.

During the years that we leased an apartment in Honolulu I quite regularly visited two of Hawaii's Mormon libraries and extracted data on peripheral ancestors, mostly of wives.

I felt it necessary to actually visit the many geographic places named after the family names. During the visits in the nineteen eighties I attempted to photograph the streets and localities with their different spellings. Jill and I in our rented car started to visit one area after another. When we were in Friesland I inquired about any Coehoorn living in this area. To my surprise I found a young pastor of the reformed Dutch Church who had done some research in the Cohorn/Coehorn family and he accompanied us to a church on a rise in the vicinity of Groningen and Leeuwarden. The area is often flooded and the church on a rise gave shelter. There I found several items of family history in the form of carved armorial designs on 'mourning shields' combining the crests of husbands and wives.

Travelling south we entered North Brabant in the southern Netherlands and what I called Coehorn Country. At St. Oedenrode we visited the family castle at Henkenshage and admired the collection of family portraits and ephemera. We saw one of the original mortars designed by Menno van Coehorn and at the Royal Netherland Army Museum of Delft some of the original editions written by General van Coehoorn covering studies and treaties on fortifications.



We searched for and found the Menno van Coehoorn Tank Regiment, (formerly infantry) now housed at Havelte and met its commanding officer, Capt Lohuis. We visited the burial sites of a number of the Cohorn family members.

Of my particular interest was the altar of Menno van Coehoorn at the church at Wijk. He is shown, carved from marble, resting on his left side, indicating that he had died in battle.

I wanted to study the portable mortar, invented in 1670, named after the General, and used in many parts of the world. The last reported use of the mortar is among mountainous terrain in South America during the nineteen twenties.

I learned of an early Cohorn, showing a knight in full armour who is buried in a cathedral in France, in a standing position. I felt a visit there would be useful. Checking as much as possible the veracity of a Cohorn having been banned from the Vatican for participating in a duel while in the service of a pope also seemed a good idea.

Then there was the supposedly early existence of Cohorns in Sweden. While studying the records of the University at Upsalla I learnt of a student at the University of Heidelberg who latinized his name; a Kohorn who changed his name to Neale to sound more 'British'. This information had been simply accepted and included in my published data, but without very careful confirmation and verifications.

With my memoirs under preparation I was interested to research all questionable items, in particular while vacationing at the shores of Queensland. The only small drawback was the lack of historical information carefully collected, readily available at my office at Wellington, which I failed to bring with me to our Sunshine Coast winter home at Alexandra Head.

My original studies grew substantially and I had produced three further volumes of the Cohorn Clan books. I terminated the 'Cohorn Clan' series at book 4 that covered the American Cohorns. They were first mentioned in the Colonial Wars where the Coehorn mortars were still being used. It is virtually impossible to conclude a study of the Cohorn/Kohorn family without going into concentrated research of the widespread distribution of Cohorns throughout the Eastern United States.

The search for any mentions of the name Kohorn and its derivatives became second nature to me. I came across a surprisingly inexplicable mention of the name Cohorn. I discovered an ISLOTE COHORN listed in the register of Chilean lighthouses under number CHI 011. It's geographic location is given as 53 degrees 33'S in the Strait of Magellan.

Fortunately a number of Cohorns have made genealogy their hobby. I was able to draw on their experience and only had to establish the proper family connection between the earliest American Cohorn with one of the later day European Cohorn/Kohorns.



## APPOINTMENTS

Shortly after I first arrived in Wellington I called on the American Ambassador, as I did everywhere. The Ambassador in residence in New Zealand in 1963 was Herbert Powell. The embassy located on the fourth floor of a midtown office building was simple and did not have the panache of other US embassies I had visited.

The reception however was warm and helpful. Herbert Powell was appointed in 1963 and served until 1967. In 1965 he encouraged me to become the founder, director and senior vice president of the American Chamber of Commerce. I remained in that role until 1974. In 1988 I was elected as life member and in 1992 an Honorary Fellow. As was to be expected the position brought with it obligations to make speeches welcoming new and overseas members. I particularly enjoyed giving money raising talks' to new donors. Judging from their visages in the photograph, they were less than enamoured by the speech than myself. The particular meeting was held in the Beehive (government building that houses the ministerial offices) in Wellington.

In 1969, Kenneth Franzheim was appointed Ambassador. Ken was an oil millionaire and proceeded to make many improvements to the residence.

Armistead Selden followed Kenneth and my involvement came mostly from my membership of the American Chamber of Commerce. Armistead served from 1974 – 1979. Monroe Brown followed him in 1981. I arranged an appointment with him and when I walked into his office commenced by saying:

"I don't think we can be good friends. You are a *Bruin* (UCLA) and I am a *Trojan* (USC)." Those were the two opposing Californian University football teams. It did not however appear to have bothered him in our future relationship.

Our good friend Della Newman was appointed Ambassador in 1985. Della turned out to be an excellent diplomat. Her husband, Wells McCurdy, acted as her private photographer and recorded all her ambassadorial steps and functions. After Della came our closest Ambassadorial friend Josiah Beeman whose appointment lasted from 1995 to 1999. Since then my age and our lengthy visits to Australia have not allowed us to maintain a close relationship with the diplomatic scene that had been part of our life.

My title can give rise to incidents and one occurred in Wellington when Jill and I



attended a reception for a high-ranking German government official visiting New Zealand. At the function I was presented to one of the visitor's wife as "Baron Kohorn". She replied rather snootily, "One does not recognize that name." She was referring to the fact that her husband's title was superior to mine as her husband was a Count of the German "ancient aristocracy".

Although I could have pointed out my full title I would still have had to admit that her husband's title was superior. Accordingly I said nothing. A few months later her illustrious husband was arrested and incarcerated for bribery and tax machinations.

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In the nineteen seventies I was the delegate of the Mana Cruising Club to the New Zealand Yachting Association and had attended its annual meetings at various venues throughout the country. After several years I was elected chairman of the cruising committee and enjoyed the fellowship of yachties from all over New Zealand. My involvement with yachting began to take up most of my days. There was Mana Cruising, (my local yacht club), my association with Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club, IOBG (the past commodore fraternity), The New Zealand Yachting Federation, the Marine Radio Organization of New Zealand, the N.Z. Small Boat Safety Committee, The New Zealand Water



Safety Council and the New Zealand Search and Rescue Committee and co-founded the Wellington Maritime Museum.

I was honored to be elected a Life Member of Yachting New Zealand and in 1979 co-authored with Keith Murray the New Zealand Cruising Guide. Until 2000 I skippered my vessel *Columbia*. I have attended five America's Cup races in various parts of the world. My life very much revolved around yachting.

As a result of my involvement with the New Zealand Water Safety Council I was

present at a ceremony where HRH Prince Andrew presented various diplomas to members of Council. At that time the New Zealand's Governor General was Sir Paul Reeves, the first Maori thus honored. At one stage of the proceedings Lady Reeves would have been without an escort. Probably because of my title being on record, I was appointed to escort her to the Prince's function. I silently stood on the dais and bowed when required and with the others received my Diploma of Life Membership of the Council.

## FULBRIGHT FOUNDATION

In 1965 the then American Ambassador Herbert Powell asked me whether I would accept an appointment as a director of the New Zealand American

Educational Foundation. The Executive Director was Eric Budge and later Laurie Cox. The Foundation's directors were appointed by the Ambassador and by the New Zealand Prime Minister. The tenure was for a term of two years and meetings were held at the American Embassy. The directors appointed with me were Sir Arthur Nevill, Sir Alister McIntosh, Sir Howard Kippenburger and Mr. Frank Callaghan.

Meetings were held once a month and I enjoyed the systematic work of selecting the recipients from New Zealand applicants. Applications on standard forms were submitted to the Foundation's office and presented by the Executive Director to the directors on meeting days. Each application was examined by every one of the directors, and after full discussions the Executive Director would duly contact the selected applicants.

This method of scrutinizing the applications appeared to me cumbersome and unnecessarily longwinded. After my second reappointment as a director by Ambassador Kenneth Franzheim, and after lengthy discussions with Laurie, I proposed a complete change in the methodology of the selections. My proposal was accepted and required copies of each application to be sent to all the directors prior to the meetings. It became then the responsibility of each director to make the selection in his or her own time by means of a grading. At the director's meetings the grades were then simply converted into numbers, A+ =1, A being 2 A- Being 3 and so on. Laurie kept a tally sheet for the students and the previous hours of discussions at the Directors' meetings turned into a simple procedure of selection by determining which applicant had achieved the lowest numerical value.

It did happen that the Fulbright directors unanimously chose a law student applicant with the previously unheard of result of A+ given by each director. This grantee was the son of a high court judge who was also a director of the Sports Foundation and who much later became New Zealand's Governor General.

Late January 1976 I learned that there was to be a conference of the heads of various United States Education Foundations based in Asia, Australia and New Zealand. The venue was set for the end of February at Penang. I agreed to attend the conference and addressed the assembly with a speech on local financing problems. My talk was applauded, so I guess I must have said something of interest.

The other delegates had travelled from various Fulbright Foundations that paid their fares. I paid for my own tickets, selected my own itinerary and class of flight. I made reservations for Wellington to Singapore via Sydney on February 10<sup>th</sup> and the following day via Malaysian Airways to Penang. All delegates stayed at the Evergreen Laurel Hotel and I found it a most convenient venue for the conference.

With the conference over we all dispersed and I flew via Perth and Sydney back to Wellington arriving home on the twentieth. That was a lengthy but practical way of getting home to Jill and New Zealand.

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Successive American Ambassadors reappointed me to the Foundation. In 1987 my work culminated in meeting with Senator Fulbright in Washington and receiving a US Government Tribute of Appreciation for being the longest serving director of any Fulbright Foundation.

## WELLINGTON PLANETARIUM

My interest in navigation and cartography brought me close to the management of the Carter Observatory. Money was required to purchase a planetarium projector and install it in the existing building of the Observatory. Inquiries were made in the U.S. and Germany for the latest type of small town, low budget instrument. We ultimately purchased an instrument from Eastern Germany that has since given us excellent service. I had been appointed Chairman of the Finance Committee and made the usual round of companies and generous friends to raise the funds. The sale of seats in the planetarium, with engraved nametags from the donors, proved to be of particular success. I must admit I enjoyed attending planetarium shows seated in my own named chair.

By 2007 the Minister of Technology on the New Zealand Government gave the Observatory one and a half million dollars annually to develop and upgrade the equipment.

## LIBRARY FOR AMERICAN STUDIES

In the middle of the 1970's the American Ambassador Armistead Selden approached me and asked whether I would undertake raising funds to establish a Library for American Studies at the Canterbury University in Christchurch. It was only natural to assume that American owned companies in New Zealand should be contacted in the first instance.

"Mister Innocence Abroad" could certainly apply to me. At this stage I had no specific knowledge of New Zealand taxation laws and learned with surprise that donations from companies were NOT tax deductible. As a result I thought it would be most difficult to raise funds for a library in far away New Zealand.

I then had a bright idea. I approached the Minister of Finance, Robert Muldoon with a proposition. I would get companies to donate books to the Library, each book with an ExLibris showing the donor company's name. Would Muldoon consider these donated books as advertising and thus a tax-deductible expense? Good old Rob asked for a sample of the proposed ExLibris and shortly after gave his approval to this type of tax deduction. The photograph was taken during my discussions with Robert Muldoon and the CEO of Westpac Bank.





I went to twelve American companies, starting with General Motors, Ford and Kodak and in a short time had raised the funds for the Library. At that time Professor Neville Phillips was Vice Chancellor of the Ilam campus of the Christchurch University and I flew down to Christchurch, and enjoyed advising him of my successful fund raising. Neville's son Jock later became a Fulbrighter where I again met him. Dr. Jock Phillips is now New Zealand's Mr. History

One of my co directors was a Maori, Professor Whatarangi Winiata who approached me to raise funds for a yet to be established Maori University at Otaki. Remembering the success I had in funding the library for the Christchurch University, I contacted the U S Library of Congress for assistance. I explained that this was the first Maori tertiary institution bereft of any facilities and eager to start programs that would of course require a library. My efforts were successful and a director from the Library in Washington eventually came to New Zealand. Professor Winiata further asked me to open the new library at the Otaki Marae when the American arrived. My speech for the opening was to be made in Maori.

I engaged a young university student to coach me in pronunciation of Maori words. Rather than attempt to give a speech I selected a poem written by the great Maori warrior Te Rauparaha and learned it by rote. Our Congressional Library benefactor, my wife Jill and I duly arrived at the Otaki Marae. In gentle rain we sat in the open waiting for the ceremony to commence. There were a great number of very large Maori ladies standing in front of the Marae. On the



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other side stood a number of stalwart young men. I stood up and in my best Maori recited my carefully learned Te Rauparaha poem. Then came my great moment. One of the young men came forward and performed the ceremony of challenging me. I did all the practiced motions and now we were ready for our American benefactor's great speech. He stood up and said: "Congratulations on your undertaking. Good luck," and sat down.

My poor Professor Winiata was speechless at our guest's speechlessness.

We still had to go through the ceremony of hongiing and pressed noses with about twenty ladies. We then had tea and cake and still damp from the rain drove our guest back to Wellington. Washington, however, did not let me down and a large number of books were donated to the Otaki University.

## COT DEATH RESEARCH

My good friend Ron Scott (later Sir Ronald) lived in Christchurch. He was interested in supporting a medical foundation and in particular the problem of cot deaths and general difficulties with unborn and newborn babies. Such a foundation had been established in many parts of the world under different names.

Ron had decided to travel under the flag of *Foundation Forty One*, indicating the period of gestation and the problems with unborn children during that time. Having known of my successes of raising money for various non-profit causes, but in particular as a co-Governor of the New Zealand Sports Foundation, he felt that I would make a good chairman of the Finance Committee. Apart from Ron, Judge Augusta Wallace (later Dame Wallace) and myself, most directors were medical people, either teaching or practising medicine. We raised substantial amounts of money and distributed it to researchers and individuals occupied in highly specialized fields of pre-natal studies.

## INSTITUTE OF DIRECTORS

While still in White Plains I had been invited to become a member of the Institute of Directors. I was elected a Fellow in 1959. After arrival in New Zealand I inquired about the Institute of Directors, and became a member of the local branch. Unfortunately there is very little interest in the antipodes in this organization.

I remained a member and when Jill and I were in London we learned of the exclusive head office of the Institute. I telephoned and made reservations for lunch. We had an excellent and very expensive meal and were presented with a Sherry Menu. It contained a listing of the different vintages of sherry they claimed to keep in their cellar. We each selected a glass of the more reasonably priced Sherries, which ran from two pounds to an astronomical thirty-eight pounds for a small glass. On the positive side they served very fine Stilton cheese.

## MARITIME MUSEUM.

Over the years I had collected a considerable number of books and other maritime ephemera from the many countries I had visited. After my by-pass surgery I became concerned with my collection. I had a good friend Jack Churchhouse who in 1972 had been employed by the Wellington Harbor Board and placed in charge of the building that housed the Board's collection and books. In the early 1980's he agreed that I could bring my books to him and he would find space to store them. Over the next several months I slowly delivered my hoard to Jack and helped him display some of the Harbor Board's items.

More by luck than intention, the retired Rear Admiral Ian Hunter was spending much time at the bond store to sort a collection of photographs of past naval vessels. With his maritime knowledge and connections he was in the best position to create a Maritime Museum.

A number of interested parties, not the least being the capital's Harbor Master, Captain Mike Price, decided to form the Maritime Museum. They converted the "Old Bond Store" into a museum, calling it *Wellington Maritime Museum*.

Chairman of the Harbor Board was Nigel Gould who assisted greatly in gifting the building to a newly formed Maritime Museum Board. To operate this new body a professional curator had to be sought and Ken Scadden chosen. I was appointed a Trustee of the museum from 1989 until 1996. During that time I produced a booklet that outlined the history of the building, the exhibits and contained a request for sponsorship. In many ways I repeated my efforts for so many organizations; that of begging for money for those worthy causes.

One day Jill and I were invited for lunch to the home of Ian Hunter. After the meal we were talking about the need of private financing of the Museum. Ian showed me a list he had prepared of "selling" individual items to potential donors. On the list was also the old boardroom marked for twenty thousand dollars. I pointed out that this was the 'Jewel in the crown' of the harbor board building and should be worth at least fifty thousand for which I would like to bid. By the time we had our coffee Ian had agreed that subject to the Wellington City Council's approval I could have the naming rights to the Board Room.

A few days later I received confirmation that for fifty thousand dollars I could acquire the naming right.

Since I have no funds in New Zealand I contacted my financial advisor in the USA, explained that I had bought the naming rights and would he please make a telegraphic transfer directly to The National Bank Wellington, the Museum's bankers.

Three days later Ken Scadden advised me that a remittance had been received from the States in the amount of ninety two thousand dollars. When I told Jill about it she burst out laughing and pointed out that my request for fifty thousand dollars obviously failed to specify the currency. Fifty thousand were fifty thousands, and when coming from the States they were fifty thousand US

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dollars. The National Bank had correctly exchanged the funds into New Zealand currency and made the payment accordingly. Always generous Jill pointed out that I should not be 'chintzy' and make a further donation of the dollars necessary to make my naming rights purchase an even one hundred thousand New Zealand Dollars.

To make it a bit of a festive occasion Fran Wilde the Mayor of Wellington and Bill Brian the Chairman of the Museum Trust and about fifty invited guests assembled in the now newly named *Von Kohorn Board Room* and formally accepted my payment. From 1989 until 1996 I was appointed a trustee of the Wellington Maritime Museum, now renamed Wellington Museum of City and Sea.

Over several years Ken developed and headed the Museum until the entire structure of museums in Wellington came under the City Council. Over the protest of many of the original founders the Museum was renamed *Museum of Wellington City & Sea*.

## NEW ZEALAND ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

In 1981 two young people came to my office at 65 The Terrace. One was Judith Fyfe and the other Hugo Manson. They explained to me their hope of starting an oral history archive for New Zealand. They had heard of my success in raising funds for new undertakings and hoped that I would be able to assist. They suggested that I could be the Chairman and find suitable directors.

Subsequently I accepted Vice Chairmanship and approached my good friend Sir George Laking to accept chairmanship and Lady Margaret Trotter as one of the directors. Judith Fyfe and Hugo Manson were also elected as directors all without the need of issuing shares or raising capital.

Meetings were regularly held in my boardroom and a list of individuals and companies prepared as potential clients of the OHA. There was the need of actual equipment and the assistance of an editor to supervise the technical phases of recording oral history. Based on Judith's know how, I was happy to purchase the high fidelity recording instruments overseas at a considerably lower cost compared to those locally available.

The first of our clients was the New Zealand Dental Nurses Association, which was celebrating its one hundred years anniversary. They wished to record from the elderly members of the association, the memory still retained in their minds. That resulted in our creating the slogan, "Because tomorrow is too late." This became particularly fitting when we next did a history of the Centenarians.

The storage of the recorded interviews became a constant worry. The hundreds of tapes had to be kept in proper humidified surroundings. After lengthy discussions we decided to approach the New Zealand National Library and offer all material to them. Since starting the Oral History interviews with paying clients we had accumulated several thousands of dollars and offered to transfer these funds to the Library when presenting the tapes.

This was accepted by them and now the entire Oral History is safely in their hands.

## NEW ZEALAND SPORTS FOUNDATION

While I still had my office on the fourth floor in Commerce House in Wellington, before moving to Shannon, my secretary announced that there was a Mr. Hancox and Miss Mary Revell to see me. I met a short, stocky young man who explained that he had in February 1964 swum across Cook Strait and intended to swim across the English Channel. He explained that he had beaten the Cook Strait time by two hours and felt well qualified to establish a record in England.

He needed his and Miss Revell's fares (she was acting as his swim organizer) to travel to the United Kingdom and would I assist him in this venture? It did not need much time for me to agree to finance this sporting event and a happy Keith and Miss Revell left my office. Of course he kept me up to date and in August advised me proudly that on 7 August 1965 he became the first New Zealander to have successfully swum the English Channel.

After this, Jill and I saw Keith and his wife, Carole, at numerous diplomatic functions, but there were no further sports contacts until Keith, and his former swim coach, Tony Keenan, came to me once more seeking assistance for a young swimmer, Rebecca Perrott. She had just won the US bi-centenary 400m freestyle championship in California. Keith was convinced that she would bring several gold medals to New Zealand, (which she did in the Montreal Olympics and Edmonton Commonwealth Games). Once again I agreed to participate in financing a sports star in the making and history proved Keith right when, as a multiple medal winner and champion, she was inducted into the New Zealand Sports Hall of Fame.

By this time Keith had become a journalist, working from the Parliamentary Press Gallery, but was always closely interested in sports. He discussed with me the formation of a sports organization to finance young athletes. I agreed to become a founder in Wellington while Ron Scott (later Sir Ronald) would join from Christchurch and Les Mills from Auckland. This was the birth of what became the New Zealand Sports Foundation. I felt strongly that it needed a permanent head to stabilize this fledgling body. Keith agreed to come aboard and was appointed Executive Director.

I remained a Director until 1985 when the structure was amended. From then until 1990 I was elected as one of the Governors. After my stroke I resigned from all my directorships and asked my close friend Dick Heron (later High Court Judge) to take my place. At that time I was pleased to accept life membership of the Foundation.

It became an illustrious Board of Governors including David Beattie (later to become Governor General), and Douglas Myers.

Once the New Zealand Sports Foundation was under way, we were looking for a more efficient method of raising funds to finance the athletes. While

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donations from companies and organizations were of great importance, the contributions from Government were of far greater consequence. On one of my previous visits to Europe, I had a lengthy meeting with the head of the German Olympic Committee, including a visit to the President of the German Yachting Federation at Kiel.

The information and methods used in Germany to raise funds for the athletes appeared of value to me and I submitted lengthy explanations to both the Olympic and Empire Games committees.

At that time our good friend Ken Comber who was Linley Holyoak's brother in law, had been appointed Associate Minister for Sports. I contacted him and told him that Jill and I intended to visit Korea after attending a Blue Gavel yachting conference. Since I would pay our travel, would Ken provide me with a letter of introduction to his ministerial counterpart in Seoul? I intended to discuss with the Minister the Korean method of raising funds for their athletes. Since the travel would be without cost to the New Zealand Government my request was officially granted and the necessary written introduction provided.

Jill and I left Auckland for Noumea and Singapore on 12 May 1975 and after a stop at Hong Kong and Taipei arrived at Seoul on May 26<sup>th</sup> at seven twenty p.m. via a Korean Airline DC-8. Asian Airlines are always good and Korean First Class was outstanding. There was an all-Korean flight crew (ex Air Force) up front and the female cabin crew obviously selected for their charm and beauty. Our visas were good for ten days and I had made hotel reservations at the Hilton Hotel in Seoul. There were large construction problems in the city, and the dust and mess unbelievable. After calling officially on the Sports Ministry we met with the Deputy Sports



Minister Tan Sri Chong Kah Kiat who kindly presented both Jill and me with the 'golden Sports pin' of Korea. We were then invited to the "*Blue House*" (the governmental guest house) for dinner and Jill was further presented with a Korean ladies *Hanbok* National costume. I was interested that the Government and not the very powerful and wealthy public companies financed the athletes. I advised Ken Comber accordingly.

The following day we were taken past Camp *General Glen Walker* to a nearby lake, the National Center for shallow draft sail racing. To keep us further

amused we were also invited to the Seoul *Tak Kwon Do* stadium and sat through one display after another watching the breaking of 'tiles' with fists, foreheads and feet.

On May 31<sup>st</sup> Jill and I boarded a North West Oriental Airline Boeing 747 and left for New York at twelve fifteen. We arrived via Tokyo and Seattle ten hours later. We remained in White Plains until 23<sup>rd</sup> June when we returned to Wellington 12<sup>th</sup> of July 1975 via San Diego, Papeete and Sydney.

## AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY WORK

Jim Belich, The Mayor of Wellington, approached me one day to tell me of some happy news. Shirley Martin and I had been selected to be made Honorary Citizens of Wellington. We both were invited to attend a ceremony to be held at the Town Hall on 7 August 1987 for our investiture. On the appointed day, in the presence of several hundreds of people, we were duly called on the stage. After each having being presented with a plaque bearing the arms of Wellington, we were "pinned" with a medal to be worn. The appellation reads "Presented . . . in recognition of outstanding voluntary service."

Titles give rise to incidents and one occurred in Wellington when Jill and I attended a reception for a high-ranking German government official visiting New Zealand. At the function I was presented to one of the visitor's wife as "Baron Kohorn". She replied rather snootily, "One does not recognize that name." She was referring to the fact that her husband's title was superior to mine as her husband was a Count of the German "ancient aristocracy".

Although I could have pointed out my full title I would still have had to admit that her husband's title was superior. Accordingly I said nothing. A few months later her illustrious husband was arrested and incarcerated for bribery and tax machinations.

## SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE

In 1972 Lou Fisher established a trust for young New Zealanders by donating a magnificent schooner and named it *Spirit of Adventure*. It was to be used to take young people around the New Zealand coast. In view of the great interest in these voyages a second ship was commissioned and named *Spirit of New Zealand*. She was a steel built barquentine and carried a crew of boys and girls.

Some years later Lou's son Ken approached me in both my capacity as patron of *the International Order of the Blue Gavel* and as a private individual. I was of course pleased to be able to assist and arranged for IOBG to make an annual donation of one thousand dollars and I would match this with an equal amount. When *The Spirit of Adventure* called on the Port of Wellington the captain conducted me through the ship, including the private quarters for Lou and Iris Fisher, and presented me with one of the ship's plaques. Each year the trust brings together 1200 young people throughout the country.



### RALEIGH VENTURE 1986-89

There were several approaches made to me to participate or assist organizations that were newly formed in New Zealand. One of these was the English founded, Prince Charles headed, *OPERATION RALEIGH*.

It was a body formed to assist young boys and girls and introduce them to foreign travel and life aboard ships. Moving from one country to the next, they would participate in learning new life styles, habits and modes. A retired New Zealand Admiral was head of the operation and I was made Financial Chairman. As with other ventures, I was required to approach individuals and companies and encourage them to participate in the financing of one or more of the fifty participants for the next leg of the voyages. I was extremely fortunate in finding great support in Lady Adrienne Stewart, wife of the chairman of P.D.L. Industries.

### RADIO

In 1977 the director of the radio division of the New Zealand Post Office approached me to write a booklet about the change of radios used in boating. Until that time radios operated with Double Sideband Frequency. Congestion of the space available in the 'Spectrum' had made a new method mandatory and Single Sideband Frequency had been developed. In simple terms the frequencies had been made narrower. All frequencies are controlled by the International Telecommunication Union and they assign the frequencies to a specific body in each country. Those frequencies covered radiotelegraphy, television, radio facsimile and radio. The frequencies, from 156 to 162 Mega Herz (MHz), were for marine use.

In New Zealand the assignee was the New Zealand Post Office. In 1976 the New Zealand Yachting Federation appointed me chairman of the Combined Marine Radio Organization. I held that position until 1988 and had become known to the various people in the Post Office as a person who could explain technical matters to novices.

We first used double side band radios for communication from boats. Then came the mandated single side band. Next came the change to VHF FM and the use of Radfone. There was one frequency that could connect you directly to a Post Office channel allowing speech transmission. Of course everyone could listen in by calling up the identical frequency. There was also another group of frequencies used mainly overseas for communication with moving stations (cars, trucks, boats) called CB (citizen band) and not requiring a radio licence. A number of boat users in New Zealand acquired these CB radios and used them to call up each other and then advise what frequency to switch to within the VHF/FM spectrum. Since different types of frequencies required different types and lengths of aerials, there began to appear an array of antennae on

mastheads. Some were invisibly housed inside plastic shells (radar and television). Others sprouted like branches of trees (FM and telecom).

When we enjoyed our lengthy holidays aboard Columbia, Jill was always the radio operator. She was a licensed operator whereas I being a foreigner I was not allowed to apply. Our cruising meant we made extensive use of the radio facilities and it was not until the end of the 1980's that we had the convenience of a cell phone. That made booking restaurants and arranging to meet people easier and private.

The main problem we had with radio reception was the hilly Wellington/Marlborough topography. VHF Frequencies designated for ship to ship usage worked well if the boats were in line of sight but frequently you could be no more than a mile away and be unable to make contact because of intervening hills. The relatively low transmission power exacerbated the problem. SSB radios were expensive, designed for long distance communication and few boats bothered with the installations. By the mid 1980's talk through translators solved the problem and in many ways are similar to Cell phones. The translators were placed on the tops of the highest peaks and thus usually in sight of the transmitting vessel. The translator easily receives the relatively low power output from the vessel and rebroadcasts the signal that can be heard over large distances.

### **1983 GRAND TOUR**

In 1983 we arranged a six-month holiday through India, Europe and America. Two weeks before we were to leave my dear friend Ghanshyamdas Birla died and we of course changed our flights so as to visit Calcutta and pay my respects to his sons.

The flights were via Sydney, Darwin, Singapore and Bangkok. The latter section was memorable for a thunderstorm that shook the airplane considerably.

In Calcutta reservations had been made for us at the Great Eastern Hotel. The room was dingy and pokey and after complaining loudly and threatening to leave, we were shown to a very nice suite facing front and overlooking the Tollygunge, a green oasis in the middle of the city. This was my twenty-first visit to this metropolis on the Ganges River. My previous visits were business calls on clients, but this time it was a sad errand to see my old friend Bhasant Kumar Birla and his wife Sarala. B. K. was the third and youngest son of Ghanshyamdas Birla of New Delhi.

Ghanshyamdas had suddenly died on 11 June 1983 while on a visit to London at the age of eighty-nine. He had been cremated at Golder's Green in London, his ashes flown to New Delhi and in accordance with Hindu customs they were to be placed in the Ganges River. The main ceremony of his funeral was held

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in Calcutta on 23 June 1983. A number of tents had been erected in Birla Park in Ballygunge. It was a very hot and humid summer day when the large number of invited guests sat down for the eulogies and speeches. White silk lined the inside of the tents and Persian silk rugs covered the lawn. We were the only foreigners who had been invited and two chairs had been placed for us in the tent. All other family members and close friends were Indians and sat cross-legged on the floor.

The day after the service B. K. had arranged for his wife and us to show us around the major Birla establishments in Calcutta. First came the Birla temple that had been under construction for many years and although hundreds of artisans toiled constantly on the stone edifice, it was expected to take several more years before its completion. We then drove to the Birla Museum and were shown around by the curator. Later we were taken to the Birla Hospital and to one of the many Birla schools. The generosity of the Birla family had gifted many institutions to the Government of India, and had assisted in the education of literally thousands of Indians, both in India and at institutions of higher learning abroad. He certainly was a precursor for the rush of young students, which today are making such an impact on the burgeoning electronic industry of India.

From Bombay we went to Cairo for six days. We visited our friends including Fifi and Ihab Sorour who had been the previous Egyptian Ambassador to New Zealand.

We decided that we should visit the pyramids of Cheops. Jill wanted a camel ride but instead we climbed up the outside and then went inside. We engaged a guide who was incredibly tall, skinny and old and had with him a stump of a candle. We did not immediately understand the need for the candle. The climb up the outside was along a path that was steep and very hard on our legs. There was an opening and once inside we had descended for a while then had to climb a long wooden ramp. Suspended above the path was a power wire with light bulbs suspended therefrom. Only a third of them worked and that was the reason for the guide's candle. Economy was probably the reason for the small size of the candle. By the time we had completed the tour we were both exhausted and the following day could not walk.

We visited the newly excavated ancient Nile river barge contained in a humidified air-conditioned glass enclosure. The pits containing the vessels were discovered in 1954. One of the boats had been reconstructed by being stitched together with vegetable fibers. The boat could have been used to transport the body of the Pharaoh Khufu.

We made a visit to the Khan el-Khalili market where Jill bought a silver belt that she subsequently had gilded in Singapore.

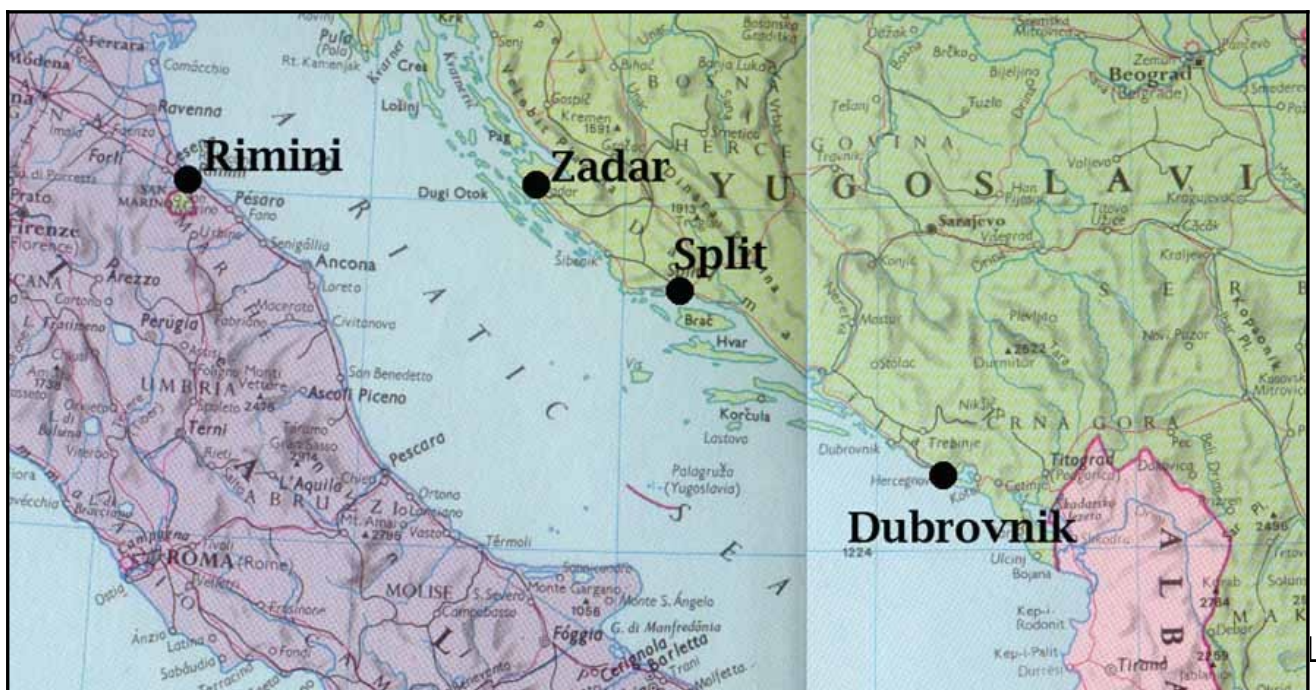
On the fifth of July we were up early to get the six o'clock flight to Athens. It was a two and a half hour flight and that meant we could spend most of the day at a yacht club. Jill and I took a taxi to the Royal Greek Yacht Club at the Piraeus harbor. There was no flag officer available but the club manager was a

former captain of the Greek navy and fluent in English. We had lunch on the Club's veranda overlooking the yacht harbor and that meant Jill still thought that yachting had its positive sides. However she has frequently said that she must be the only person to visit Athens just to visit a yacht club and to see nothing else. Once lunch had been completed we went back to the airport to fly to Dubrovnik.

## THE LOSS OF MY PASSPORT

Many things happen on trips. One of the most embarrassing and annoying incidents occurred in Yugoslavia in July 1983 on our way to Italy. We had left Cairo early in the morning of the fifth and flown to Athens. There we changed planes but we had enough time to allow us to rent a car and drive to the Royal Greece Yacht Club at Piraeus Harbor. As Jill often pointed out to me since, other people come to Greece to visit the Parthenon, we came to Greece to visit the yacht club. After a luncheon on the terrace overlooking the harbor, we drove back to the airport and caught the Yugoslav Air Transport flight to Dubrovnik. The Dubrovnik airport is built high above the Adriatic on one of the few flat pieces of land.

We had a confirmed reservation for a suite at the Hotel Excelsior, the leading local hotel high up on the cliff overlooking the old town. In spite of that we were given a second rate room. This was followed by an attempt to fob us off with a dirty and old car that was not what the pre-paid reservation specified. Having spent much time in Yugoslavia in the early fifties and always having had nothing but the best service, the irritating and outright abrasiveness of the local population came as a most unwelcome surprise. Both episodes were eventually settled to our satisfaction and we wound up with a small suite at the hotel and a fairly new Volkswagen Golf, but only after much arguing and bribery.



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We had a great way of traveling. Jill did most of the driving while I sat, surrounded by Michelins, road maps, sightseeing notes and other navigational paraphernalia and told her where to turn. We followed this system for a number of years and found it the most efficient, and over the years clocked tens of thousands of kilometers in Europe, USA and Australia.

There were two further days of minor annoyances, while sightseeing and driving north along the Adriatic coast to Zadar staying overnight at Makarska and Split. The only hotel in Makarska advertised proudly that it was 'second class' and they were not wrong. The town's only plus was that it is the home of the world famous Maraschino cherry brandy that comes in a tall bottle encased in wickerwork. The views of the Adriatic Sea to our left, as we proceeded north, and the truly majestic mountains to our right made the trip almost worthwhile. However there were more frustrations in Split with Hotel Marjan and several local restaurants. The only mitigating factor was the visit to the Split Yacht Club and the one at Zadar that both received us royally and made us truly welcome. By that time we were not looking forward to any more days of aggravation. When we saw an advertisement for the Adriatic ferry to Italy we decided on the spot that we could not get out of Yugoslavia quickly enough. We booked a first class cabin on the next crossing to Rimini in Italy.

The ship was to sail at nine in the evening and we arrived in ample time to check in and drive our car aboard as soon as the gates would open. Then we saw a large sign that clearly stated Yugoslav currency could not be exported. Funds exchanged legally through bank channels, had to be changed back at the authorized *valuta* (foreign currency) exchange office. We enquired and were directed to the nearby office. When we arrived at 8:25 the doors were already locked although the sign stated that they closed at 8:30. Rattling the door, banging at the window, jumping up and down and shouting had not the least effect on the staff still inside. Had it been a small sum, I would not have been concerned. When we had arrived I had expected to stay for about a week in Yugoslavia. I had changed a thousand US dollars in traveler's checks and furthermore bought a hundred dollars worth of gasoline coupons, the only payment acceptable to the petrol stations dispensing the rationed fuel.

Time was passing quickly and when finally in disgust I jumped back into the car, I threw my Yugoslav money, exchange permit, passport and petrol vouchers on the seat. We raced back to the pier to drive on to the ferry. We arrived in the nick of time. The crew were already casting off the lines and told us to hurry up and be sure to take with us our hand luggage and travel documents.

Then tragedy struck. My passport was nowhere to be found! The crew helped us search the car but to no avail. Accompanied by their assurances of 'No problemo, no problemo' we took the few bits of luggage we needed for the night to our cabin and then settled down to a late picnic supper sitting on our double bunk in the tiny cabin. We always carried a chilly-bin stocked with a few items for an impromptu meal on the road. It contained champagne, the newly bought bottle of Maraschino cherry brandy, a salami, fruit, bread and so on.

After a generally rather worried night I prepared for our arrival and readied all papers including the 'triptique' for the car. This would allow us to drive the vehicle anywhere in Europe with the Yugoslav licence plate and its big red star in the middle. Once back in civilization we bought a bottle of twink and carefully whitened out the Yugoslav red star on the white licence plate confusing police and border patrols all over Europe.

We searched once more for the passport, but of course to no avail. I dug out a number of letters of reference from New Zealand government departments and other organizations, to at least prove that I was a reliable person, although temporarily minus a passport.

"No problemo," the man had said.

Was he wrong? I thought once more what could have happened and finally came to the conclusion that, in my rage, when throwing the passport in the front seat, I had dropped it on the pavement or street. By now all passengers were lined up on the wide companionway leading from the cabins to the car deck. Delayed by our talk with the purser, we were last standing at the top of the stairs and clutching an overnight bag and the chilly bin in its bag. In my haste I had not closed the snap catch properly and suddenly the carrier simply dropped away from the top and left me clutching the handle. The faces of the other passengers turned to stone. They looked away, embarrassed for us, but some helpfully scrambled for the carrier's contents. They had merrily bounced down the stairs to the lower deck, the bottles miraculously unbroken. The salami, apples, oranges, some cheese set aside for ageing and the bread went rolling among the empathetic crowd. Every one glad it was us and not them. Packed again, we eventually sat in the car and waited our turn to drive out of the garage deck and onto the pier in Italy.

I was dreading the encounter with the Italian customs' officials. They approached the car and held out a hand for the passports expecting to make a cursory examination. I could only explain in my best mixture of English, Spanish and German that I had lost my passport. I could have been an escaping prisoner, an illegal emigrant from Yugoslavia, a car thief or a criminal. The Italian carabinieri waved us in our car to the side and indicated that we were to re-board the ship and return to Yugoslavia. The Italian ship's officers made it clear that without a proper passport and a Yugoslav visa we could not board the ferry and certainly not re-enter Yugoslavia.

We parked on the Rimini wharf with Italy refusing me entry and similarly unwanted by the Italian ship officers. I must admit I was not overly worried. What could they possibly do to me? I could no doubt phone the American Embassy in Rome, explain the situation and eventually be cleared. It would be a nuisance, but certainly nothing too worrying. I went back to the car, the sun was growing higher and the car was facing to the East so I put down the sun visor. Of course the missing passport promptly fell in my lap. Absolutely thrilled, I jumped out of the car and waving the passport wildly, raced towards the carabinieri. The official could not have cared less. I was only halfway there,



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and from that distance I could have been waving a bunch of postcards. The officer waved to me to drive off and I am sure he was as happy as myself not to have to sort out any problem.

Rimini is only twenty-four kilometers from the Republic of San Marino. We had visited once before in 1967 and we thought it would be fun to see if anything had changed in that tiny republic, high up on top of mountain Titano. The



capital is kept in mediaeval style and the land is still mostly covered with vineyards. It was still early in the morning and we stopped at a roadside cafe for breakfast to celebrate our freedom with a cappuccino and send several postcards. When we arrived at the border post, we had to talk for quite a while to the guard to have him stamp our passports. Already in 1983, shades of the future European Community had arrived in San Marino and entry into the republic was permitted without any fuss or documentation.

At the end of the long flights to return to Wellington came the second "remarkable" autographed entry in my flight log. It is dated 15 December 1983 on a flight from Auckland to Wellington when, while over Hamilton, I logged one million

five hundred air miles. Air New Zealand had notified the regional manager and recognized the occasion by presenting me with a model of a Boeing 747 and a cake while aloft.

## AMERICA'S CUP RACES

My third attendance at an America's Cup venue was at the 1987 challenge held at Fremantle near Perth. I had told one of the BNZ directors in Wellington that I met of my interest in the Americas Cup. They were sponsors for the New Zealand team. The upshot was that we were invited to stay at the BNZ chalet at Fremantle (at our expense of course) during the Louis Vuiton Cup races. We stayed for just over two weeks and saw the races for the finals that selected the

challenger to race against the Australian yacht *Kookaburra III*. This time we did not have the luxury of a private vessel to view the races and instead went aboard one of the many commercial tourist boats. It was rough every day that we went out to view the races. During the series the New



Zealand yacht became referred to as *Black Magic* a name that stuck for future races. Unfortunately the New Zealand team was eliminated and Dennis Connor with *Stars and Stripes* became the challenger and won the cup.

My fourth attendance was for the 1988 challenge in San Diego with New Zealand's *KZ1* against the American *Stars and Stripes*, captained by Dennis Connor. This was an ill-fated campaign that resulted in endless legal protests. We again used one of the charter tourist boats to view the proceedings. Fortunately the sea off San Diego was calm.

My fifth and last attendance was again in San Diego in 1995 when *Black Magic* was sailing against and beat *Young America* 5:0. I had attended the IOBG conference in San Diego and in my new capacity of Blue Gavel's International Vice President, I was given the privilege of an assigned car park directly in front of the club house entrance. The trophy cabinet of the San Diego Yacht Club displayed a replica of the famous Cup, which I



photographed.

## **1987 GRAND TOUR**

Jill and I left New Zealand on August 17<sup>th</sup> 1987 on Singapore Airline from Auckland to Singapore. It was a ten hour flight of eight thousand four hundred kilometres. On this leg of our World Tour I was logging up two and a half million kilometers and our travel agents had advised the Airline. During the flight the stewardess rolled in a table bearing a decorated cake saying 'congratulations'.

As members of the Wellesley Club we had reciprocal arrangements with the Singapore Tanglin Club where we had made reservations to stay. We also had advised our dear friend Mrs. Karola Tan whose husband had been the representative of the Von Kohorn Organization in Indonesia. I had repeatedly stayed with the Tan Family in Djakarta and needed to pay our respects at the death of her husband Tsiong Ki.

Another visit we had planned was with the Past Commodore of the Singapore Yacht Club Eng Tat Teo and his wife Rose. Eng Tat became a member of IOBG and director of the Singapore District. We had very luxurious accommodations, overlooking the Club's swimming pool and I thought these club accommodations were far superior to staying at a hotel.

We left on the 20<sup>th</sup> via Bangkok for Rome where we arrived the following day. It was hot and dusty, so much so that we had to seek shelter in our air-conditioned hotel. On the airplane we had found Wellington friends, James and Shona Willis and promptly invited them to dinner at one of the best known restaurants in the city. He was the honorary lawyer of the New Zealand Sports Foundation.

The following day we went to the Alisarde Airline office to make bookings for a flight to Sardinia. The flight from Rome to Olbia was only twenty-five minutes in a smart new DC-9 surprisingly with Swiss registration markings of HB-IKL. I had come to Sardinia to take part and watch the precursor regatta of the America's Cup. The Agha Khan had financed the building of a magnificent marina and clubhouse at Porto Cervo then named the Costa Smeralda Yacht Club to house the 1987 America's Cup competitors, which included Des Connor from the San Diego Yacht Club.

We rented a car at the airport and drove to the yacht club. I called on the manager of the Club and as member of the Blue Gavel Organization was able to rent a small suite overlooking the yacht harbour. This was before the races had started and the facilities were not yet overtaxed. We had one meal served on our balcony, but the most memorable facility was the bathroom tiled and decorated fit for a prince, (or an Agha Khan). While the daily attire were shorts for the men, it was the skimpiest of bikinis for the ladies, while parading from their mega yachts to the clubhouse. We were fortunate to be at the club when a major dinner function was arranged. Jill and I made reservations to attend. The





table decorations consisted of half-meter high tree-shaped polystyrene stands, solidly covered with lobster tails. For the evening the ladies' skimpy briefs turned into magnificent evening ensembles. Every female was wearing the most exquisite jewellery trying to outdo the next, as befitting the occupant of a mega cruiser. None of the vessels measured less than seventy feet and all had a uniformed crew.

Unfortunately we had to leave after four days to continue with our travels. As always Jill was the driver and I navigated. Sardinia is a narrow island and we drove from Olbia directly to nearby Palau to catch the ferry to France on the road which was narrow and winding. This was good practice for the miserable road we had to contend with on Corsica. Sardinia is Italian while Corsica is owned by the French and famous for the birth of Napoleon. In Palau we got rid of our rental car and loaded down with fourteen pieces of luggage we took the ferry to Bonifacio where we hired another car. After studying the *Corse Auto Atlas*, we decided to drive the Corsica middle highway, rather than the Eastern Coastal Road. Almost at the north end of the island is Bastia from where we intended to catch the ferry to Nice.

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The 'highway' was a joke. Two donkey carts could barely pass each other. I had never seen so many curves as on the stretch from Bonifacio to the Ajaccio port on the west side. It was only 140 kilometers but took us three hours of squeezing past oncoming donkey traffic. From Ajaccio we had a good stretch of highway to the middle of Corsica where we stopped for the night at Col de Vizzavona. The views from the heights of the highway were truly breathtaking, but the road so scary one dared not look away from the road down into the valleys. Jill and I agreed that we would be able to talk for years about this drive and glad that we had done it, but would never try it for a second time.

We stayed in an excellent hotel called Eden Roc, ate on their veranda and "hit the road" the next morning for Bastia. Twenty two kilometers brought us to Corte where we stopped to look down into the Tavignano gorge. Then hundreds more curves to the Leccia Bridge where the road divided to Bastia or Belgadere. Then came a perfect highway of seventy kilometres to Bastia. It was an international port that had ferry connections to France, Italy and Yugoslavia. The cost surprised me. We paid thirty pounds each for the short



trip to Nice.

On arrival we had to go through customs. Now came another surprise. My American passport was of course acceptable to the French. Not so Jill's New Zealand one without a French Visa. After more than an hour of arguments, the very strict French custom official relented and I quote, "If you promise to get a retroactive visa, I will let you enter France".

We rented a car in Nice and checked in at a small hotel. We were on French soil where, of course, there is no French consulate. We drove to Monte Carlo to



find the French Consulate. Fortunately there was no problem with granting a visa to a New Zealander.

Being in Monte Carlo we had to go to the Monte Carlo Yacht Club. It was still before lunchtime and I called on the Club to request Guest Membership. There was no flag officer present but the lady director was happy to accept our invitation for her to join us for lunch. We dined on the top floor of a multi story building overlooking the unbelievable yacht club basin with not mega, but super duper huge biggie yachts. It is the only time I saw three hundred meter yachts. The then Crown Prince Albert of Monaco, was the president of the Club.

From Monaco it is an easy 200 kilometer drive to Aix-en-Provence and then on into what I call *Cohorn Country*, where I had relations in Montpellier, Avignon, Fontaine-de-Vaucluse, Uzes and Carpentras. I had extended family near Montfavet and was anxious to again catch up with them. Count Henri de Seguins-Cohorn was a former colonel in the French Army. Married to Countess Mireile they have a son also a colonel with service in Algeria. Henri and I visited the Montfavet cathedral where one of our 'supposed' ancestors is buried in a vertical position, covered by a two meter marble slab showing him as a crusader knight. Next Henri, Jill and I called on another "cousin" Marquise le Rocan and took pictures of the family. Sadly only a small part of their castle has survived the past centuries. Ruins show the former grandeur of that family.







From the south of France we headed north and stopped over night at Lyon in the Hotel du Parc. In the morning I saw an early bird Lyonnaise walking down the street beneath us, heading for the nearest *boulangerie*. I quickly got dressed and also went to the bakery to buy a loaf of fresh bread. Unfortunately the bread was not our favored taste. The next morning we drove via Bern, the Swiss capital, to Basel en route to Strassbourg (Strasbourg), another center of Cohorn relatives. Crossing the borders, nobody took any notice of our passports. Since I intended to invite some of my relatives to dine with us we opted for staying at the four-star Strasbourg Hilton.

We met with Count Hubert d'Andlau, his mother was Baroness Christine de Coehorn. He resided at castle *Ittenwiller* in the French Alsace while his brother Count Raymond lived at their castle *Stotzheim* in the German Alsass. The d'Andlaus had large vineyards in the Alsace and when I ordered wine to go with our dinner at the Hilton dining room, the *sommelier* recommended one of the 'd'Andlau Alsatian wines as the top cuv   of the hotel's cellar.

From Strasbourg we headed north along the Rhein to the Europaeischer Hof-Hotel in Heidelberg. Our room had superb bathroom facilities of unusually large dimensions. After a good look we ordered a bottle of German Sekt, the local equivalent to French champagne, and withdrew to the bathroom. Among the toiletry goodies displayed were two bottles of bubble bath and Jill emptied an entire bottle into the tub, watching the bubbles rise. She thought this was an excellent time to open the "bubbly" and after the first several glasses of Sekt it seemed only natural to pour the second bottle of bubble bath into the double size tub. The bubbles rose and engulfed both Jill and I in the tub. Several hours later we woke up, too late to go out for a proper dinner, but still early

enough to stagger to a '*Delikatessen*' and buy ourselves some cold cuts and sliced bread for a midnight snack in our room.



During this trip I drove to Stuttgart to investigate the Mount of Olives Statue at the *St. Leonardskirche*. (St. Leonard Church). Directly behind the altar, outside to the East is a famous late Gothic crucifixion monument. This was totally restored in 1976 by G. Schönfeld and is a very impressive sight. Originally built in 1501 by Hans Seyffer it was gifted to the city by Jacob Walther Kühorn and his wife Klara Mager, citizens of Stuttgart. At the bottom of the monument, at the feet of Mary, the family crest of the donor is reproduced. It shows the Kühorn family horn, accompanied by three stars. At the feet of Apostle John, the family crest of Klara Mager, a rabbit, is shown. The beautifully reproduced Kohorn (Kühorn) crest is the one that is described by the *Wappenkundesamt* (heraldic department) in Frankfurt. I was particularly interested in this information since I wear a ring with this family crest.

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From Stuttgart we drove into the Netherlands to visit s'Hertogen-Bosch in North Brabant and the van Coehoorn castle. It was a small family museum set up under the auspices of Baron Menno van Coehoorn who resided in Brussels. Jill and I visited "cousin" Menno and his wife who have since both died. Menno



took us on a tour of the castle in *Henkenshage*, which contained a large number of family portraits and some ephemera including medals and coins. The wall of one hall was taken up by a reproduction of the family tree going back to the Knights Templars' historic battles for Jerusalem. The Dutch side of the von Kohorn family used the spelling van Coehoorn. Unfortunately, with the death of Menno, who was childless, this side of the family is extinguished.

Cousin Menno was four years younger than myself and suffered injury at the end of the Second World War. At the last stages in 1945 he was drafted from his home and sent as part of the forces to defend Berlin from the Russians. In the battle his right arm was blown off.

As the Dutch side of the family originated, not in Holland, but in Friesland off we went to research my Friesian family. We had no difficulties to discover a number of Coehoorns and photographed various bits and pieces in churches with Cohorn connections. Of great fun was the visit to the van Coehoorn Regiment, at Havelte where we met the Officer of the Day, Captain J. Lohuis. The regiment was originally of *Infanterie* but had been changed to a Tank battalion after the Second World War.

I could not go the Netherlands without visiting one of the Yacht Clubs. We went to the *Koninklike Nederlandsche Zeil en Roei Vereeniging* and had been



directed to sit on the Club's outdoor veranda to have afternoon tea. Our location overlooked the jetty where a very smart looking small yacht was moored. It was called *De Groene Draeck*. Suddenly several uniformed young people arrived. One was a young lady in dark blue trousers and a light blue blouse. A Netherlands flag was raised on the yacht's rear mast, which had a golden crown in the middle. The young lady was the Queen of Holland going



out for a sail. We were told she came quite often to go sailing with her son, the crown prince. No fuss, no ceremony. I clicked away as fast as I could with my camera. It is not often that you can photograph a queen without protocol.

From the Netherlands we headed southwest and stopped at Reims, on September 20<sup>th</sup> at the *Hotel De LaPaix*. The hotel has on the top floor a number of suites, all named after famous champagnes. We stayed in one called *Veuve Cliquot*. Others were named *Mumm*, *Piper-Heidsik*, *Taittinger* and *Moët & Chandon*. We first went to the Reims Cathedral and since Karen was expecting a baby the next day, bought a wax candle and lit it in honor of the coming grandchild. Next we went to *Veuve Cliquot* to go on a bus cellar tour. We saw the thousands of spider webbed champagne bottles, had a taste and admired the rattling, corking and degorging equipment. Also we admired a bottle of a vintage that said to have been served to Napoleon Bonaparte in 1792.

Then it was back on the road and down the west coast to La Rochelle. We selected the Rivedoux Hotel on the Rivedoux Beach to spend the night. We had an outdoor balcony and sat to watch the tide coming in at express rate. In the beginning we saw large rocks at the water's edge and what seemed only minutes later the tide was rushing in and the entire beach had disappeared

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under water. The tidal range was only from four and a half meters but the speed the water covered the sands made it all appear huge.

The distance to Bordeaux country was about 130 kilometers and we could easily drive there to investigate and sample the famous red wines. That was very important. By now I had weaned Jill off her penchant of not drinking alcohol and she quite enjoyed a glass of Bordeaux wine. Bordeaux is very near the Alps and we were told of the Mont Blanc Tunnel, under construction. We took a side trip and went across the Saint Bernard Pass down to Aosta and then up to the Mont Blanc Tunnel and Chamonix. The snow covered Swiss Alps were indeed majestic and grander than our Southern Alps back home near Queenstown.

We arrived in New York on 1st October on an Air France 747 after a seven and a half hour flight from Paris. We stayed with Henry jr. at his home in Wilton and enjoyed to again be united with family. We dutifully attended Emily's football match at Greens Farms Academy and played the attentive uncle from New Zealand. Then we moved to stay with Ken at his home on Beaverbrook Road in Weston, Connecticut and met up with nephew Robert and his daughters Melody

and Olivia. We visited the family cemetery where both my parents are buried.



We drove to Washington for the day as the New Zealand Ambassador Bill Rowling, and his wife had invited us, to have a meal at their residence at 27 Observation Drive. Bill and his wife had been frequent guests aboard

Columbia when we cruised in Tasman Bay.

After we returned to Connecticut I left Jill with Sue and Ken I made a quick trip to Milwaukee to meet up with members of another branch of the Kohorn family. Donald was the head of that family, operating the *Kohorn Sausage Distributing Company* with a retail sales outlet. I took advantage of my family connection and arranged, at wholesale prices, for the shipment of *Summer Sausages* to all my nephews.

On October 22<sup>nd</sup> Jill packed our suitcases and we flew from the tiny White Plains airport on Piedmont Airline to Washington, transferring to Northwest Airline and then on to Memphis, changing again to a flight to Panama City in Florida. Marcy was attending a Master Class, given by her Chinese water color



teacher Madame Khan, and we joined her and Henry sr. for a week. On the 28<sup>th</sup> we flew to Tampa and stayed with Henry's inlaws, Jack and Susanne Kahn. Susanne was the president of the American distributors of the famous Danish painter Windblatt's and we purchased four of his signed prints. They now hang at our home in Queensland.

We had rented a car and drove via "Alligator Alley" from Vero Beach to Tampa, then flew to Fort Worth, changed to American Airline and on to Los Angeles to connect to San Diego.

Here we again rented a car and drove to the Club Hotel where we had made reservations to stay during the America's Cup race. We repeatedly visited the San Diego Yacht Club and admired the previously won cup trophies. We also caught up with our long time friend Doctor Milne J. Ongley, previously from Wellington, and his wife. Milne was now practicing in California. Before leaving we gave a small family luncheon for Kurt Kohorn and his wife Millie as well as for Larry and Jay Kohorn. The latter is now a Judge in California.

On November 24<sup>th</sup> we took Delta Airlines to Honolulu where we stayed again at our favorite apartment hotel at Colony Surf, overlooking the ocean.

Only too soon came the time to go back home and we flew on Continental Airlines to Auckland, arriving there on December tenth after an eight-hour flight, and my eighty-fourth crossing of the equator. We caught the afternoon plane for Wellington and were in our home by nightfall. It was the end of a wonderful World Trip and was the last of our Grand Tours.

In 1994 Jill decided that I should have a major 75<sup>th</sup> birthday party. I had enjoyed my 65<sup>th</sup> party that was celebrated with close friends in our apartment in Herbert Gardens. Ten years later Jill decided that we should have a rather larger affair. The venue was the Wellesley Club in McGinity Street. A great many prominent businessmen, diplomats, politicians and past Prime Ministers were present but it was my particular pleasure that my brother Henry and his wife Marcy were present.



### QUEENSLAND

During the 1990's Jill and I annually packed our bags and trundled off to Hawaii for a summer vacation. After my heart attack the doctor decided that the approximately fourteen hours of travel (from our Wellington apartment to the one we rented annually in Honolulu) was too long for my postoperative condition. Jill's brother John and his wife Julie had lived for many years in Australia on the coast, west of the Coral Sea. They owned an apartment in Maroochydore and managed the building. We had visited Broad Beach on the Gold Coast and enjoyed the climate and friendliness of the Australian people.

An apartment on the top floor of Picture Point became available. We made a successful bid for the floor and decided that, when in Wellington, the apartment could be leased out to the ever-growing demand of visitors to the Sunshine Coast.

A few months later the developer who had built the apartment at Picture Point decided to build a hyper modern seven-storey (restricted maximum height) apartment building at Alexdandra Head bordering Mooloolaba. Given the opportunity to select an apartment from the architectural drawings, we bought one of the three apartments on the top floor, facing north, with an internal staircase leading to our seventh floor roof garden. Friends of ours had bought the corresponding apartment on the same floor, but facing south. There was also an apartment in the middle. While the building, named *MERIDIAN*, was still under construction we decided jointly with our friends, to buy the middle apartment space, divide it into half and make it part of our respective apartments. We each therefore obtained four bedrooms with three bathrooms and ample storage space.

We decided to divide our apartment, into three guestrooms, with an internal door separating it from our private rooms. We can thus lease out our guest apartment when we are in Wellington without our personal belongings having to be moved. Jill also designed a dream kitchen with the latest German equipment and revolving storage areas. We have three parking spaces in the underground garage and two protected storerooms. The building, with a heated swimming pool, is located across the street from the beach.

Construction began while we were in New Zealand. We first saw the building when the developer was beginning the interior of our apartment that to suit our timetable had been left until last. The elevator was not operating and I wanted to view our new purchase "in situ". Due to my inability to climb stairs the developer very kindly arranged for a crane to be available at the site. My wheelchair was strapped in the crane's basket and I was lifted up to the 6<sup>th</sup> floor entering via the front sundeck. A picnic "table" was set up with champagne and nibbles; what a pleasant surprise. The developer of course used the exercise as a publicity stunt and a photograph of my ascent appeared in the local

# Crane hoists up owner for a view

Retired NZ banker inspects new luxury penthouse



**BIRD'S EYE VIEW:** Baron Ralph von Kohern surveys his new penthouse at Alexandra Headland with cage operator Arthur Bym.

Photo: David Thomas

newspaper.

## HEALTH

On 14 May 1994 I threw up violently, a typical symptom of a heart attack. The next morning I went to a doctor and underwent the usual examinations to determine the cause. After lengthy consultations and discussions, Jill and I agreed that a bypass operation was necessary. I was fortunate that one of New Zealand's leading heart surgeons, Dr. Ashok Sharma was able to carry out the procedure at the Wakefield Hospital in Wellington on 16 January 1995. The

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operation went well and all I can remember were the many kind visits of concerned friends and family.

I was back home a few days later when the American Ambassador, Josiah Beeman, arrived just minutes later with a bunch of flowers. He had recently undergone a bypass operation and had kept track of my progress and knew when I had returned home. Jill and I had commiserated with him through his divorce and later delighted in his marriage to a wonderful new wife. We gave a luncheon party at the "Tugboat on the Bay" and celebrated the birth of their first baby.

A few years later I slipped off the bed in the middle of the night and was unable to move so Jill called the ambulance. I had suffered a stroke. When we arrived at Wellington Public hospital they did everything that was needed.

After a few days I made my first attempts to move and use my limbs. At first there was the paralysis of the left side, but I thought I could improve by moving my hand and bending the left arm. After a few days I was transferred to the rehabilitation ward and made steady progress under the direction of the physiotherapists. That is, until the specialist in charge of the ward arrived to examine me. Her cheery diagnosis was, "You'll never walk again."

We couldn't believe our ears. Jill was furious and wrote to the hospital's administration, complaining at the thoughtless and, as it turned out, incorrect conclusion. For several days I was right back to square one until I said to myself, "You bitch - I am going to show you!"

I practised with a 'walker', and soon received permission to join the aquatic class at the hospital pool and to exercise there with various forms of gym equipment. I had made a friend of one of the patients on the ward and we spent time together with both our wives, especially at meal times. The evening before I was to be discharged, Jill fixed dinner and carried it in with tablecloth, cutlery, decorations, candles and wine and we enjoyed a party for four in my room. The staff were most impressed.

When I returned home after my stroke it became clear to Jill and I that laying in bed my health deteriorated rapidly. The exercises at the hospital had been interrupted because of the remarks that had been made by Dr. Palmer.

Once home, twice a week the ambulance collected me and took me back to the hospital swimming pool and the physiotherapy department. After two months it was decided that I was so improved I made the other patients look bad and they had done all they could for me. That was a wonderful moment except that I felt I would need more help to get really well.

Rather fortuitously Sharon Crosby, a friend of Jill's had taken her along to work out with her personal trainer and when I saw how good he was, I quickly decided to also sign up with Joe Campbell. Together Jill and I went three times a week. With the regular exercises came continued improvement. When Joe moved his practice to larger premises on the seventh floor of Upper Willis Street, we moved along with him.

The new gym had, however, one major drawback. The building's lift only operated to the sixth floor. That was fine for the way to the top floor. Adequate handrails allowed me to pull myself up from the sixth to the seventh floor. The problem came 'with the way down'. Psychologically, when climbing the mind sees the next step as coming closer. Not so with going down. The mind sees the next step as further away and I immediately reacted negatively. The fear of falling shut down my logic to take the next step and I always needed to be carried down to the next floor. After a few attempts to relax and overcome this mental block I gave in and persuaded Joe to make 'house calls' and visit me twice a week at our apartment. I improved visibly and could gauge for myself the improvement by the increase in weights with which I train.

Joe felt that he could possibly do better if he had a different name. After pondering for several months Joe decided to change his name from Joe Campbell to Joe DiMaggio. He took all legal steps to carry out the name change but now often has to explain that he is neither the famous American baseball player, nor that he had been married to Marylyn Monroe.

When we made our annual visit to Maroochydore Jill suggested arranging fixed visits on a by-weekly basis to a gym specializing in the restoration of partially paralyzed clients. At the first visit I staggered into the exercise room. As time passed my mobility improved, particularly when working on a one to one basis and with the specialized equipment.

Back in Wellington, the former routine with Joe continued the slow but steady improvement until six months later it was again time to take our next pilgrimage to Australia. We were a bit tired of the need to drive to the former gym, wait for the workout and then drive home. Jill and I had used a masseuse that we felt comfortable with and when we told her that we were looking for a gym instructor she advised she was a qualified gym teacher who was regularly working with Queensland local surfers. We came to an arrangement to have Kathie Kirby make house calls twice a week and that we would supply the necessary gym equipment. We had great fun shopping at a supplier of sports equipment at wholesale prices. We acquired a whole set of graduated dumbbell weights, of medicine balls and a fifty centimetre Swiss ball. Finally I treated myself to a pair of shiny, black gym shorts and a pair of white gym shoes. I was a picture of elegance. Doing all exercises either in our air-conditioned apartment or on one of the decks was simpler and more enjoyable than traveling to a gym. I quickly learned that after a strenuous session with a four-kilo, (improved from a previous three-kilo) medicine ball it was advisable to drink a tall glass of water to prevent dehydration, especially in the local dry and hot climate.

In Wellington in 2007 we came to an agreement with Joe to purchase from him the bicycle machine, previously in his gym. I slowly increased my pedaling session from thirty seconds to two minutes, while Jill has no problem to pedal for a full ten minutes at various stages of resistance. The handlebars are designed to measure the heart and allow one to increase the speed and load of the pedals to the desired heartbeat.

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Joe and the bicycle machine have made the biggest improvement to my mobility. From limping with a cane, I suddenly discovered that I could walk, although slowly without a stick.

In 2002 while living in our apartment at Picture Point in Maroochydore we invited Jill's mother to come and stay with us over Christmas. Shortly before her birthday Jill had complained about chest pains. Her brother John and his wife Julie knew a local doctor and sent us to him. Rob Ingham examined Jill and ordered her to be taken immediately to a hospital. We opted for a private clinic, which was available under our insurance plan. We were advised, however, that none of the private institutions would have the facility to handle a serious viral problem. In the nearby township of Nambour is the region's base hospital and Rob made arrangements for Jill to be taken there.

One examination followed another, always unsuccessful with no determinable cause for the high fever and persistent chest pains. Finally, after days of tests, the specialists determined that there was water in her lungs, which were drained twice still without result. The period around Christmas is not the best for staff availability and it was a worrisome time for Jill's family and me. Either John or Julie took Jill's mother and me daily for the nineteen-minute high-speed drive to visit the hospital. Finally after New Years, came the breakthrough. A virus was lingering in the liquid in the protective sack surrounding the heart, with the fancy medical name of *Pleuro Pericarditis*. A cure could be started with immediate antibiotic and steroid treatments,

One of the pleasant interludes while in the hospital was a surprise visit by our friend Shane Bycroft who, together with his Barbershop Quartet group, performed several Christmas carols for Jill and other patients in her ward. It was not until two years later that Jill was finally pronounced totally cured of that virus.

Rob was not just a fine diagnostician, he was also a superb plastic surgeon. I developed several suspicious small spots on my face, hands and legs. After quite thorough examinations an appointment was made for a single session for all to be excised at one time. Rob gave me local anaesthetics, chopped out the nasty bits and sent them for examinations to the Governmental Laboratory. The incisions then only needed stitching. I can testify that the remaining scars are hardly noticeable and, while not necessarily something to look forward to, it certainly is nothing to fear.

When we returned to Wellington in May 2003 Jill was still recovering from the infection around her heart. The winter took its toll and the strain became too much. She needed time off from her twenty-four hour duty of looking after me. The doctor's orders were that either Jill went to hospital or I went to a rest home. We had decided that the most convenient place would be for me to go for a month to the Malvina Major a modern facility high in Wellington's northern hills.

Keith Murray came to see me the day I arrived at the home and we chatted for a while in the conservatory. Keith left when my nurse came to take me to dinner.

She was not a young person and her countenance resembled that of Madge in the Dame Edna Everidge show. At the entrance to the dinning room she explained that she had a seat for me at a table with the men. I promptly stated I would much prefer to sit with the ladies and she arranged that. It was not a good decision. The ladies were of course all my age but for most their eating abilities had declined considerably. One promptly took out her false teeth and placed them on a plate. Another spat the tough bits of food out onto her plate and altogether the girl's company was not stimulating.

The next day I had the happy thought that if I ignored the dinner gong then by the time they realised I was missing, the ladies would have finished their meal. That worked very well but I could tell that I was not popular with the staff. Fortunately Keith lived close by and for the next two evening meals he took me out to a local Italian restaurant where I feasted on steak and mussels. We also had two luncheons in Khandallah. On the third day things went wrong. Keith was away skiing and perhaps the accumulated excesses of the previous days were too much for my system. I had another stroke and was moved to the Cashmere hospital. The room there was larger and sunnier and most importantly I could have all meals therein.

It took some time for me to recover and by then Jill was back on her feet. She continues to look after me; showers, dries, salves and prepares our meals. On and on, every day and night. The stroke and heart problems make it hard for me to walk. As I tell people I send the message down to my legs but it often gets lost on the way. Thus there are many things I can no longer do. After the fiasco with Malvina Major, Jill checked with many friends found a quiet sanatorium in Lower Hutt called ROPATA. We drove there and found a modern beautifully kept place. I have now had two one month stays at Ropata and they have given Jill a much needed respite.

I selected a very large room with its own garden, private bathroom and fridge. Once I had a direct phone line installed, a working television, a table on wheels for the computer near my bed arranged and a photo of Jill hung on the wall, it almost felt like home. The guests at Ropata were more mobile and fully *corpus mentis*. I qualified and soon fell in with the daily routines. I preferred breakfast served in my room rather than joining the others in the dining room. For lunch and dinner I enjoyed the company of two other gentlemen. There were ten round tables in the dining room and usually up to six patients seated. A majority of what I call facetiously *inmates* were ladies

The second time I stayed there I was placed at a table for five, two men and three ladies. I soon got used to the chatter. I also got used to the female caregivers showering me. At ROPATA a number of them are of Polynesian origin and nothing could be nicer than a stout Samoan adjusting the temperature of the water to be just right and then soap and scrub me until I glow.

Recovery from the stroke was very slow and when my brother Henry celebrated his ninetieth birthday in October 2003 I was unable to attend. All of Henry's



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family gathered at Vero Beach, Florida. The most distant travelers were David and Lisa from San Francisco with Zoe the newest grand daughter.

### **AFTER 1997**

One of my oldest friends was Andrew Goeritz in London. We had been friends since childhood and visited each other several times through the years. The last time we had seen each other was when Jill and I arrived in London from abroad, had been whisked to Andy and Raymonde's home in mid city, had breakfast there, were taken back to the airport by them and had flown out to New York. Both Andy and I had experienced heart attacks and thought a lengthy visit would be appropriate before departing this mortal soil. Quickly deciding, half a year later, Andy and wife got on a plane in London, flew to Wellington, changed to a local plane, then flew to Nelson where Jill and I received them. They then came aboard Columbia and the four of us went on a short, but much appreciated cruise. Andy, who was formerly clean-shaven, had meanwhile grown a luxurious beard, dispelling the fact that he was younger than I. Raymonde, always the Parisién, had continued to let her very long, very blond hair grow and after having left Columbia we would find hairpins in her bunk for several weeks. After only four short days we took our friends back to the Nelson airport from where they rushed back to their home in London. The following year Andy succumbed to another heart attack and passed quietly away.

I commenced using my passenger flight log in September 1942. It has been invaluable assistance to record these memories. The last entry in the book is dated December 1994. Although there were plenty of pages left I was no longer able to hand write the details.

At that time I had flown two million eight hundred thousand kilometers. At the time I passed the two and a half million mark I had crossed the Tasman eighty five times, the International Date Line thirty eight times, the Equator eighty two times, the Atlantic seventy three times and the Pacific thirty three times.

### **SUMMARY**

Over a lifetime everything changes. I always loved travelling and the means thereof was always improving. Airport locations for major cities changed; Schöнау to Tempelhof, in Berlin, from Le Bourget to de Gaulle in Paris and from Croydon to Heathrow in London.

The aeroplanes changed dramatically. I had flown in the early DC-3 to Boeing 747 and on the way used Electras, Viscounts, Constelations, Stratocruisers and the Comet I to IV. I was fortunate to have flown exclusively in First Class, later Luxury Class. I had graduated on Stratocruisers with the early double-decker

sleeping arrangements to the modern sleep-capsules on Thai Airways and now Air New Zealand. I experienced the early *Panam* dining facilities on the upper deck with candles and perfectly dressed stewards offering sides of beef, rare or well done, followed by a bomb Alaska soufflé for dessert.

My health now restricts me to flights of no more than four hours in the air. I still enjoy flying, with happy anticipation each time I enter an airline's airport "Club" facilities prior to boarding. Seats for Jill and myself were usually reserved in either first row left or right of the aisle with my wheelchair stowed below, not too far away from the crate holding our cat. With unlimited sources of money flying always has been a breeze.

In February 2006 a historical researcher in Florida contacted me. Lee Chodkiewicz-Chudzikiewicz was a Polish Count whose grandfather supposedly lived in Chemnitz. Count Lee had studied the von Kohorn family for years. He advised that he had proof we were of Jewish heritage and could file for a compensation claim from an organization supposedly holding millions, nay billions of Euro Dollars for distribution of compensation to victims of the Holocaust.

"Yes, sure," I said, "and does that also give us the right to Nigerian Bank accounts?" was my cynical reply.

After the exchange of dozens of e-mails and later of many telephone calls we, that is almost all of the Von Kohorns in the United States and I, finally came to the conclusion that the Count was not a charlatan or a nut case, but a researcher specializing in claims from an organization for the compensation to Jewish victims of the Nazi oppression.

As registered in the GOTHA (the official registry of Austrian/German nobility), the von Kohorn zu Kornegg family is shown as belonging to the ISRAEL (JEWISH) religion. My parents like myself had no religious beliefs but my grandparents were strongly part of the Jewish religion. As a result Oscar and Vally's marriage had been celebrated in the synagogue in Vienna. When my brother was thirteen he was made barmitzwa at the synagogue in Chemnitz. By the time I became thirteen in 1932, the political situation in Germany was such that a religious celebration was considered unwise by my parents. Neither Henry nor I were baptised, either Jewish or Christian.

When we arrived in New York in 1939 Vally quickly decided that she needed to be part of the normal protestant American scene. That meant attending church on Sunday and she joined the parish of the Lutheran church on Park Avenue near our apartment. The whole family attended church on Sunday.

During my military service my US Army dog tag was embossed with a 'P' indicating to any *padre* that I was to be buried a protestant if killed in action. We had never regarded ourselves as Jewish but were aware of our grandparent's religion.

In general I kept my birth religion of Judaism secret, but at least had the fortitude to tell my Anglican mother in law, Lady Alma Storey, that she would

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acquire an aristocratic Jewish son in law. Her reply was:

“As long as you are not Catholic, it is fine with me.” I continued claiming to be a protestant of the Lutheran persuasion and followed in my brother’s footsteps, who became an active member of the Lutheran Church at Greenwich in Conncticut. When I lived with my first wife in White Plains, NY, Diana could not find an Anglican church and joined the Presbyterian Church, as recommended by her British girlfriend Isabelle Bigley. I could not see any differences in these religions and happily joined my brother's family for Sunday services usually followed by a family dinner at a nearby restaurant, often accompanied by our parents.

When I met Jill I was already a registered member of the minuscule Lutheran Church in Wellington and it became our weekly outing to attend the Sunday service followed by lunch in the dinning room of the Royal Oak hotel as thank-you for my wife to be for attending the Lutheran Sunday service. Once we had become engaged the church service and formal lunch slowly petered out. Jill’s parents had a similar attitude to my Jewish background as had Lady Alma Storey.

It is interesting to reflect that quick meals with Jill before attending movies were at a Chinese diner in Ghuznee Street where we would order noodle soup “with extra pork” or perhaps “pork flied lice” with extra pork. That was not contempt for my birth religion simply enjoyment of the cuisine and a lack of interest in religion.

Count Lee did weeks of research using Internet data banks to establish the extent of our family and the number of Jewish relatives that had been killed by the Nazis. Having been born and lived in Germany, the claims office advised us that we were required to collect and submit documents to establish our bona fide and submit birth certificates.

To make matters even more difficult Henry died in December 2006 and that required many documents in connection with his will and inheritance. Having changed my name from Freiherr (Baron) Rolf-Stefan von Kohorn zu Kornegg to a simple Ralph Von Kohorn and, similarly, my brother’s simplification to Henry Von Kohorn, resulted in further complications with our documents in English requiring translation into German to satisfy the German courts.

We searched for and discovered families consisting of eighteen relatives in Germany, Austria, Czech Republic and what was Yugoslavia that had legal rights to compensation. We also discovered that eight of my relatives had been exterminated in concentration camps. We searched for and located about twenty properties that had been owned by our father in several countries in Europe. Once such ownership is legally and indisputably proven these properties also became subject to claims for compensation.

I am now eighty-eight years old; my brother was ninety-three when he died. The Nazi persecutions occurred more than seventy years ago. I never had cause to hate the German race and during my childhood was sheltered from the

realities of Nazi regime. When our family arrived in New York in 1939 being German was difficult. Vally's decision to be part of the Lutheran church was sensible. We had the resources to start again and it was easy to simply ignore our racial background as it was not part of our beliefs.

Henry was very particular that we be part of the Lutheran church and that our children be baptised and brought up with Christian instruction. During the years of McCarthyism we had even more reason to ignore our Jewish background. There were at the time comments that Jews were all communists.

The horror of concentration camps and the mindless killings of Jews is an historical fact of a dreadful political system. Previous visits to Yad Vashem (the Holocaust museum) while traveling through Israel had little effect on me at the time and had not prepared me for the reality of the past that I recently faced. I admit true and frankly to years of stupid denials of my racial heritage.

Ralph S von Kohorn

Herbert Gardens

186 The Terrace, Wellington, September 2008

### **Editors Note**

Ralph did not complete this biography. After 2008 he had further heart problems and another stroke. He was unable to walk and using a computer became too difficult. Despite his health problems he was mentally alert and always cheerful. Ralph died on 16 January 2011.

During all of Ralph's illnesses Jill had been his constant nurse but she had not had the best of health since the start of the new millennium. In late 2010 Jill was diagnosed to have cancer. Despite treatment she died on 12 August 2011. That ended a very prominent flamboyant partnership and brought to an end an era of style and public benefaction rarely seen in New Zealand.

## APPENDIX ONE

Baron Ralph von Kohorn

### Awards:

|                                                                        |      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| New Zealand International Affairs Merit Award                          | 1989 |
| Wellington Civic Award                                                 | 1988 |
| United States Govt. Tribute of Appreciation                            | 1987 |
| <i>(for service to the NZ American Fulbright Education Foundation)</i> |      |

### Associations:

|                                             |                           |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Royal NZ Coastguard Federation              | Life Member               |
| International Past Commodores Association   | Founder/ Life Member      |
| NZ Sports Foundation                        | Founder/ Life Member      |
| Wellington Planetarium Society              | Founder/ Life Member      |
| Fellow of the Institute of Directors London | Fellow elected 1959       |
| New Zealand Institute of Management         | Director/Fellow 1967-1972 |
| New Zealand American Association            | from 1964                 |
| Genealogical Society of New Zealand         | from 1985                 |

### Boards:

|                                                       |                    |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------|
| American Chamber of Commerce                          | Founder/Senior     | Vice     |
| President/Director 1965-1974                          |                    |          |
| New Zealand American Education Foundation (Fulbright) | Director/Chairman  |          |
| 1965-1984                                             |                    |          |
| New Zealand Water Safety Council                      | National Treasurer | 1978-    |
| 1988                                                  |                    |          |
| Foundation for the Newborn                            | Trustee/Deputy     | Chairman |
| 1977-1996                                             |                    |          |
| Oral History Archives                                 | Founder/Deputy     | Chairman |
| 1984-1990                                             |                    |          |
| Wellington Maritime Museum                            | Founder/Trustee    | 1989-    |
| present                                               |                    |          |
| <i>(now Museum of Wellington, City and Sea)</i>       |                    |          |

### Clubs:

Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club    Special Life Member

Mana Cruising Club    Commodore 1974-1976/Life Member  
Wellesley Club

Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron    From 1969

Royal Yachting Association, London    life member from 1963



## APPENDIX TWO

A tribute by Steven von Kohorn  
Come gather 'round loved ones  
And be of good cheer  
As we celebrate a great man's  
Eightieth year.

'tis a time for fond memories,  
a stroll through the years  
to re-live a few highlights  
and perhaps shed a few tears.

Some lives pass too plainly  
Just a scramble and dash,  
Not so, Ralph von Kohorn  
He has too much panache

He has filled every moment  
That he could pin down,  
Lest in one moment's boredom  
He should stop and drown.

And now, from his comfort  
Will gaze back through the past,  
And sup from his memories  
O flife's colourful cast.

Born Chemnitz, December  
The year nineteen nineteen  
To Oscar and Valerie  
Rayon's King and Queen

Young Rolf-Stephan  
joined Heinz-Horst Eduard  
To dream of fibre plants  
In their own back yard.

School past in a blur,  
For holidays, no time  
'must catch up with Dad  
In some foreign clime.

1937 in Japan  
And no sight of a pub  
He joined The Yokohama Country

and Athletic Club

His name is still on the roster  
For the most persistent in sport  
He never gave up the chase  
For any good sort.

To the University of California  
And then Michigan U  
So he could make poly vinyl acetate  
And spell the word too!

As "Tojo" the soldier  
He stepped out in fine form.  
Linguistic Hypnotics  
His daily nonn

As a New York bachelor  
It was champagne and fine flowers  
And Ralph's Red Room  
Was of course,  
open all hours

But even this young rascal  
Homeward would dash  
For a warm family dinner  
and Valerie's delicious Goulash

New factories in Egypt  
Seemed a good sport,  
Then fibre plants in Russia  
for Techno.prom-import

1947, Partition in the Punjab  
Hundreds killed every day;  
Ralph commandeered a Mosquito  
And escaped to Bombay

But one trip to Australia  
Proved his undoing  
With Sir John Storey's daughter  
There was romance a-brewing.

They married in Australia  
Groom handsome, Bride fair  
'twas a fairy tale wedding  
even the Prime Minister was there.

Then off on the honeymoon  
And back to New York  
New world for Diana  
And Ralph's back at work.

Like father, like son,  
Ralph was bitten by the bug  
Tomorrow is Bombay,  
Time for just a quick hug

Diana alongside,  
Her bags all a-flurry  
We'll miss the next country  
If we don't start to huny.

While we should go home  
For rest would be better,  
Let's fly off to the Phillipines  
And visit Amado Araneta.

Tomorrow it's silver mines  
In old Equador  
Pack a gun for the bandits  
And a blanket for the floor.

More adventure in Cairo  
Shepherd's Hotel, '52  
With bomb blasts and fire  
And an angry mob too

Out the back door by taxi  
Alexandria bound  
Only to find the Cecil Hotel  
Burned to the ground.

Thank God he married Diana  
for the time that he did  
or that fatherly glint  
Would be for some other kid.

A father to Karen

And soon-after to Steve  
Would have slowed this adventurer  
or so you'd believe

But, no! Offwith his bags  
And a spin of the prop,  
We'll build a factory  
Wherever we'll stop.

When he wasn't industrializing  
Some poor little nation  
He'd be busy with his citizen's  
class 'D', Radio Station.

Or off in his work room  
With nails, wires and rope  
Building himself  
An oscilloscope.

But life leads us all  
And we go where we're led  
Life took us to Australia  
And Ralph to En Zed.

A strange little country  
Neither fast paced nor loud  
Merely famous as the land o  
f the long white cloud.

Ralph looked down from the plane  
And began his favorite chant. ..  
Nice country but they need  
A new Nylon Plant!

So the dashing young Baron  
In his white Cadillac  
Began to prosper in New Zealand  
And would never turn back.

Well, prosperity and riches  
Could never compare  
To the lure of young beauty  
With rich golden hair.

He tried briefly to resist  
But soon gave up the tussle

Cellulose to Cell Phones

And soon became Groom  
To the lovely Jill Bussell

Through International Investments  
Ralph's business was booming  
And Jill became the Empress  
Of Deportment and Grooming

With the lure of sea air  
And taste of salt in his throat  
Ralph bought a coastal cutter  
And fitted out his dream boat.

Soon this young sea salt  
Began to jot down his muses  
About seafaring adventures  
And Columbia's cruises

With deer in the davits  
Two sat.nav systems blinking  
And life's luxuries aboard  
Columbia should have been sinking.

Not so, this good ship,  
She's tough as a tank.  
Lets fire up the engines,  
And jump another sand bank.

To every inch of the map  
Columbia would go.  
No weather could slow down,  
This intrepid duo.

While measuring and exploring  
And doing his rounds,  
He created the art work  
for the Guide to the Sounds.

But life is not all hard labour  
Whilst on this fine craft,  
There are always cocktails at sunset  
And boozy nights aft.

It would just be getting  
a little bit dark, when...  
The Pottons and party

Would arrive aboard Tarquin.

When rations ran low  
And grog stocks would dwindle  
Pick up the phone  
And call Barrie Windle.

Then whip up the engines  
And fly off with a splash  
Just once around the South Island  
And we'll be back in a flash!

When Columbia was resting  
Or up in dry dock  
Ralph would go back to his office  
To run the trusts and Genrock.

The Royal Port Nicholson  
and Commodore of Mana,  
He became the Blue Gavel's  
Local big banana.

Yes, another group he helped  
to open some doors  
The International Order  
Of Past Commodores

With Fullbright, Planetariums  
Fellowships and foundations  
He couldn't have been busier  
If he were running five nations.

Like all the von Kohoms  
Ralph was designed to be tough  
Four by-passes and a stroke  
Were not nearly enough

To daunt his spirit  
Or slow down his game  
And for his ninetieth birthday  
He'll be just the same.

Now from the words in this ballad  
You might be forgiven  
For thinking that Ralph  
Has not done enough livin'.

It's my fault you see,  
There's just not enough time  
To put all of his achievements  
Into this little rhyme.

Annette and I  
look forward to seeing you soon,  
under the stars on Columbia,  
toasting the moon.

One thing that time  
and distance can't bend,  
You'll always be my father,  
And always, my friend.